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NOVEMBER 1943

The American Mercury

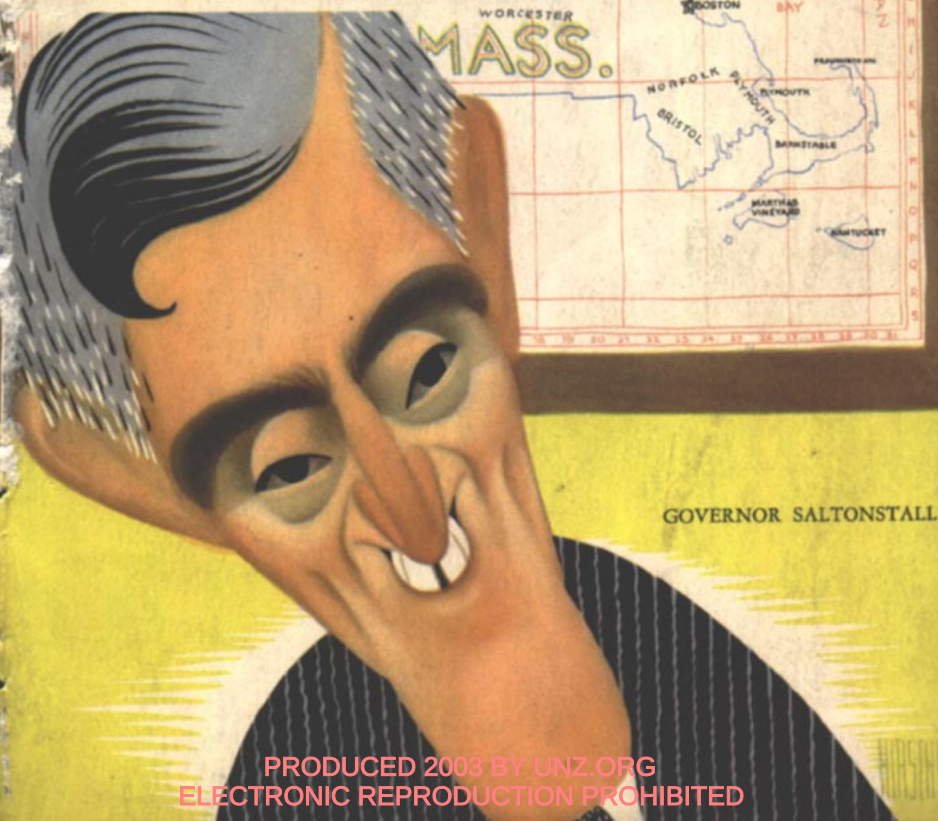
Verett Saltonstall...

A GOVERNOR LOOKS AT GOVERNMENT

CHICAGO, THE MUNICH OF AMERICA

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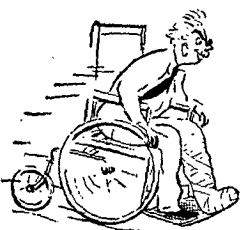
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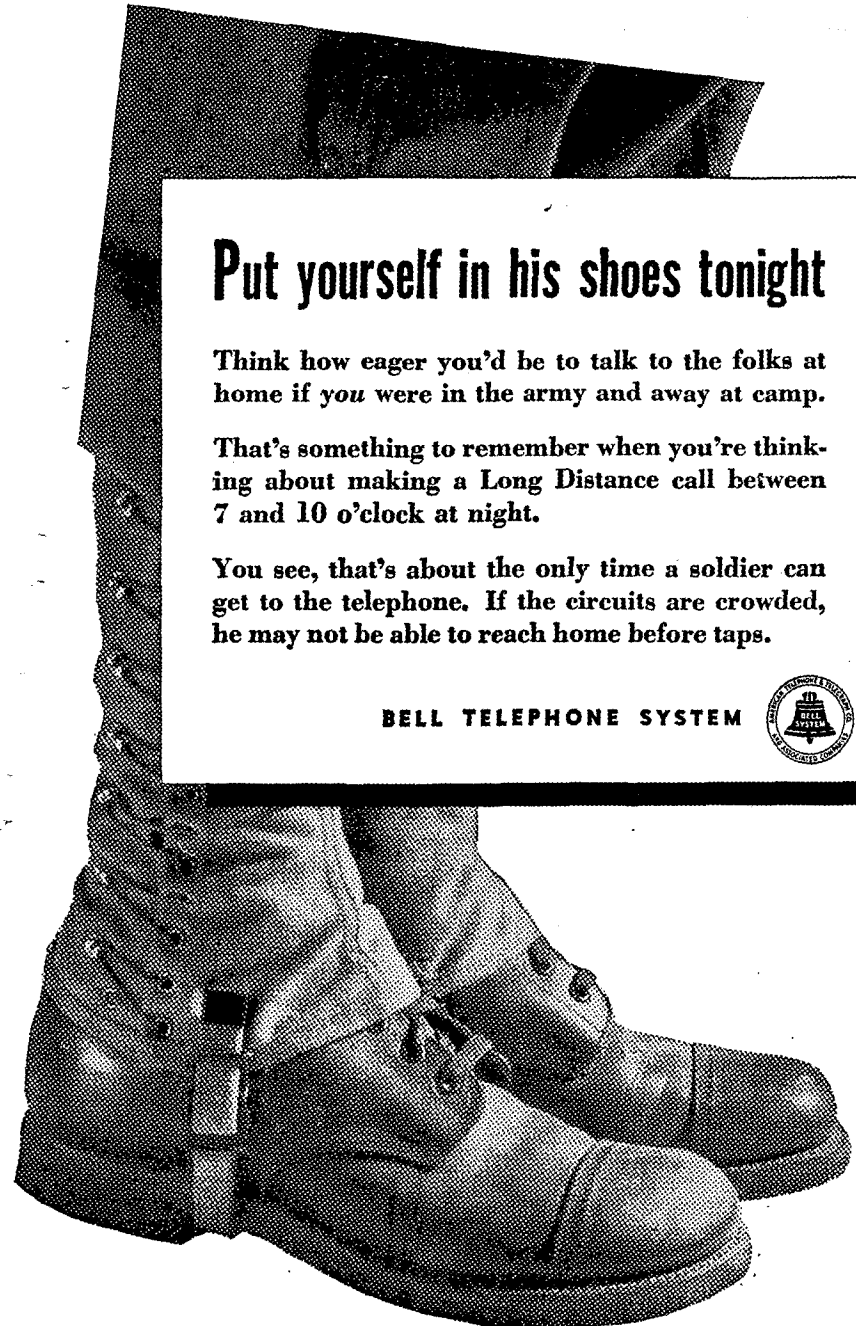
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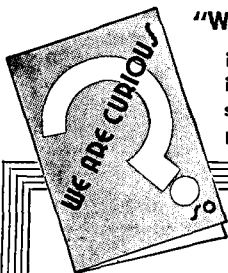
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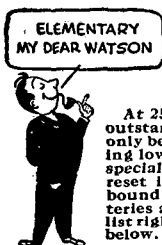
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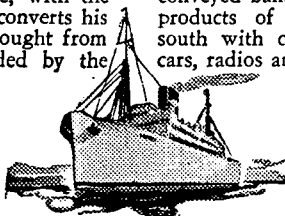
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The American MERCURY

A GOVERNOR LOOKS AT GOVERNMENT

BY LEVERETT SALTONSTALL

Governor of Massachusetts

THROUGHOUT its entire history the fundamental principle of our democracy, as of every other democracy, has remained the same: the performance by government of only such services for the benefit of the individual citizen as he believes can best be performed by all citizens acting together for the common good. Always the emphasis has been on the individual and his interests; government has ever been looked upon as no more than his servant. So in discussing current problems I like to ask myself: What does the average citizen ask of this or that unit of government — local, state or national? Are the governmental services of benefit to him, and are they performed with

maximum efficiency? If the needs of each individual are truly met, then only does government function as it should.

Obviously what every American citizen asks of his government at present is that it prosecute the war to a quick and victorious conclusion, and toward that end he is willing to make any sacrifice. That is the primary wish of all of us. But to make the winning of the war worthwhile we must give serious thought to the many difficult problems which will descend upon us the moment after the last shot is fired. This is a people's war, and the peace must be a people's peace. Our average citizen wants the United States to carry its fair and

just load in world affairs. He wants it not only to take part in setting up the terms of peace, but in making certain that those terms are carried out to the last item. Only in this way can we keep faith with the men and women in our armed forces and spare future generations another war like the present.

At this stage it would be rash to draw up a blueprint of the peace terms or of the postwar world. Events are moving too rapidly. There are too many conflicting, changing and imponderable factors involved. Let us not forget that the Constitution of the United States was not drawn up till ten years after the Declaration of Independence, and then only after long deliberation.

Certain things, however, are already clear enough. The physical security and the future prosperity of the United States must be our primary concern. Events have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the future of the United States depends upon the stability of the world. Greater friendly understanding between nations is absolutely essential if international peace is to be preserved. No gross international injustice, no gross international aggression must ever again be looked upon as alien to us. The progress of science has made all

nations neighbors. What happens to one is the concern of all.

The United States must assume its full share of neighborly responsibility, but in doing so we must beware of the holier-than-thou attitude. We cannot expect all the other peoples of the earth to have the same points of view, the same desires, the same reactions, just as we do not expect them to impose their ways upon us. There must be a spirit of give and take. Differences of race and creed must in no way interfere with tolerance for each other's beliefs and customs. Only the attainment of this goal will have made of this war a great and holy cause. Otherwise it would better not have been fought at all. The profound spiritual values of the conflict must never be lost sight of.

There are also practical aspects of the coming peace and the postwar world that command general agreement. "Sneak" attacks, such as the one on Pearl Harbor, must in the future be made impossible. We must have air and naval bases wherever the preservation of our national security demands them — in both the Pacific and the Atlantic.

As for international cooperation, there are many forms and all of them have merits. But whatever form is finally decided upon, it is

clear that the stability of the world depends upon the best possible relations among the United States, Great Britain, Russia and China, and between the Pan-American countries and the United Nations generally. Here, again, we don't have to tell each other how to run our local and private affairs. We need act together only on problems that affect our mutual security, our trade, and safety. The all-important thing is the will to act cooperatively in this sphere. It seems to me that the development of this will is immensely more imperative at this stage than the effort to draw up precise and detailed schemes of international organization, none of which can at present carry much authority.

Perhaps we must first make separate understandings with each of our Allies. Certainly they would be very helpful. The United States might profitably pledge itself to a general policy of teaming up with other nations to keep the peace once victory is achieved. A clear-cut resolution by Congress in that direction would not only lay a firm basis for international cooperation; it would clear the atmosphere and accelerate world progress for years to come.¹

¹ This article was written prior to the Congressional vote on the Fulbright resolution. — Ed.

II

With the world at peace again there will return the major responsibility of supplying the needs of our citizens at home. What each of them wants first of all is a job, and rightly so. Relatively, the troubles of a man at work are few. The problems of a nation at work are largely solved when the factory whistles blow. While prosecuting the war to complete victory must be our first duty now, planning to keep the country a going concern afterward is a responsibility we must assume at the same time.

The opportunity for each man to earn his daily bread is the surest guarantee of freedom from want. Naturally, character, initiative and willingness to work are also essential to that freedom. But in these complex days and in the perplexing times ahead, mere character and willingness to work are not enough. Jobs must be provided for willing workers at all times in the postwar world. It is a fundamental and terrifying fact that a nation unemployed threatens world peace.

With the end of the war in the United States will come an unprecedented shift from war to peace economy. Some 9,000,000 veterans, both men and women, will come home, eager to find jobs.

Many times that number, now working in munitions factories and shipyards, will find themselves unemployed. What will happen to these millions? Will they be obliged to rake leaves, sell apples, boondoggle, exist on government relief? If not, where will they find the jobs that will permit them to live life as we in America know it should be lived? And what of the farmers, especially those with one horse and one plow, who will suffer just as much in the transition period as the industrial workers?

Some of them will not be able to help themselves while the retooling from war to peace is in progress. They will expect the government to create jobs for them on useful public projects. The federal government is rightly doing broad-scale planning in this direction, making preparations for vast public works which will take years to complete and will have permanent value. That is all to the good. But we must remember that such schemes can be only temporary; they cannot form the foundation for the future structure of our country. The people will want to get back on their own, and the sooner the better. Our nation was built by self-reliant men and women, and it is composed of the same type of

men and women today. They look upon government help as a very transient makeshift. That attitude is one of the glories of our democracy. Let us always foster it!

We who are in state and local government can and must play a major rôle in bringing back our economy to the plane where Americans can be themselves. We can stimulate thinking ahead by public officials, individuals, companies, local commercial groups, and industrial associations. Unless private enterprise and local government play the major rôle — unless the problem is solved by democratic means — we won't have a democracy very long.

In Massachusetts more than two years ago we formed a Postwar Readjustment Committee to lay the groundwork for meeting such problems. It is developing plans for the reconversion of the state's leading industries to peace-time production, either in their present fields or in new ones to which our resources, especially in skilled workers, are particularly adapted. We aim to help every returning soldier, every individual taken out of a war-time job, to direct his efforts to the best advantage of himself, which, we believe, will be to the best advantage of his community and ultimately of his nation.

Our committee advises the *consumer* to curtail present expenditures, get out of debt, save, buy government bonds for specific purposes, such as the children's education and the purchase of durable goods later. For the *business man* the committee recommends planning in terms of volume of output, large employment, and total profits over a long period, rather than in terms of high unit prices and high margins. *Labor leaders*, the committee points out, should recognize that business profits and jobs go together, and that they should think in terms of permanent jobs rather than wage rates alone. The committee emphasizes that *every plant* should put one man in charge of postwar planning on a full time basis *now*.

If industry, large and small, distributor as well as manufacturer, will tackle the tremendous task, then we shall win the postwar battle without suffering any serious social injury. Jobs, unlike Topsy, won't just grow up. We must deliberately create them. And the time is now, for already thousands of our boys are returning home, eager to be rehabilitated and go to work.

Aviation, of course, will offer the greatest opportunities for postwar progress and jobs for thousands

of workers. The postwar period will see the real beginning of the air age. The operational phase will be ready for practically immediate realization, though the economic phase will present vast and intricate problems still to be settled. I believe there must be 1. world-wide freedom of peaceful transit; 2. private ownership and management; 3. genuine competition; 4. reasonable government regulation; and 5. the closest international co-operation. It goes without saying that government at all levels—national, state and local—civic groups and private industry, should exert great efforts to assist in the development of air transport, both passenger and freight, private and commercial. I look to the establishment of international airways as one of the most potent forces for international peace.

III

Beyond and above a job the average citizen wants the opportunity to get ahead and provide his family with a little more than he enjoyed. Victory abroad will not secure this opportunity for him. We at home must actively and continually strive for it. That means more team-play among workers and employers. It means constant

readjustments in the functioning of collective bargaining, more extensive cooperation through labor-management committees, some of which are already operating successfully. In Massachusetts we have one that meets for discussion and suggestions and covers the state as a whole. The same idea can be carried out even more effectively in individual plants.

The average worker rightly favors collective bargaining as the basis of America's future growth and stability. Judicious government assistance and regulation have to a great extent checked the abuses in both industry and labor. Our stupendous war production is traceable to the team-play among all three: government, labor and industry. The fervor of war-time effort can and must be duplicated in peace-time. I have small patience with those who depict the labor-industry relationship as a struggle. Mutual respect between workers and employers, and friendly intervention or regulation by government, can accomplish astonishing results. It has done so in war. It can do so in peace.

I cannot stress too much the importance of mutual respect in all social, as well as individual, relationships. The average citizen, whether he be worker or employer,

whether or not he himself belongs to a racial or religious minority, I am convinced, wants fair treatment for all. We have done much in fostering this tolerance, but there remains much more to do. I am in favor of the widest possible discussion of real and fanciful complaints, even when coming from crackpots and agitators, because I believe the fundamental good sense of the American people will side, in the end, with what is right and fair. We need all the understanding and tolerance we can get. Only a really united and tolerant America will be worthy of our courageous soldiers and sailors when they return from the battle-fronts of the world. As the late Justice Louis D. Brandeis has said, "The United States is a nation of nations." As such it must set an example to the rest of the world. It has done so in the past, and I believe it will continue to do even more so in the future.

The average citizen looks to his government for an increasing amount of economic security, especially in the forms of unemployment compensation and old age security. The funds for the first are raised from labor and industry. The national government provides administrative costs, and the states, the administration. I strongly be-

lieve the states should continue to perform this function. Children's aid and old age security are provided by a combination of funds from local, state and national governments. Both services must be constantly improved and extended. Compensation for illness or disability may well be added gradually; and naturally those who are injured in the present war must be adequately provided for. And where a man or woman cannot work, direct relief should be available. But no government unit should ever make a promise of a benefit it cannot see its way clear to carry out. There is no greater hypocrisy to our people and no better way to create lack of confidence in government.

In all these fields we have yet to work out completely satisfactory federal-local relationships. The average citizen feels his local community can far better administer to his needs than a paternalistic federal government. How much the federal government should enter the picture, even with subsidies, depends upon the tax problem — the current need for revenue and the methods applied to raising it. Of the need for government help in social security there can be no question, but we must always remember that the most effective

help which Americans have known from 1620 to 1943 has been help to help themselves.

The average American does not want the New Deal entirely scuttled if that means losing what has been unquestionably gained in the past decade. There can be no thought of turning our backs on the advances made in social security, regulation of securities exchanges, working conditions, wages and hours, and similar progressive measures. The average citizen wants to discard only government by edict, collectivism and experiments made simply for the sake of change. He has no use for mere tradition. He wants to go forward without hesitation or fear. He wants to take the offensive in social progress. He wants to share fully in the operation of government, and he wants his town or city, and his state, which knows his needs best, to have the first call in meeting those needs. He rightly fears the weakening of individual enterprise, initiative and resourcefulness by an overgrown central government.

The question of states' rights in our system of government is coming more and more to the front. A clue to its importance can be found in the recent newspaper poll of Congress as to the most vital domestic problems. Senators and

Representatives of both parties placed as first and third on the list: *the decentralization of government* and *the safeguarding of private enterprise*. It was no coincidence that the Governors of our states in annual conference in Columbus, Ohio, last June, made this topic the basis of their Number One resolution. Pointing out that to help win the war the states have already yielded many of their powers to the federal government, they unanimously resolved:

No further concessions or encroachments on states' rights should be agreed to, except such as may clearly appear to be necessary to achieve victory, and that all rights of the states heretofore relinquished to the federal government to further the war effort be promptly reclaimed when this war shall be successfully terminated.

I feel, however, that the word *rights* does not clearly convey the spirit of the resolution. The states do not seek to preserve moth-eaten prerogatives. They seek only the restoration of the chance to do some of the jobs which can be done better by them than by remote control. The need for centralized authority in war-time is self-evident; but it decidedly should not continue into peace-time.

Looking toward the future, it is interesting to speculate what the result will be of certain trends we

can see developing. Will the tendency to more and more federalization escape all checks, so that everything will be run from Washington, with the states practically disappearing as units of government, and even municipalities taking orders from Washington? This was actually suggested recently by a federal official in Baltimore! Will the present war-time system take permanent form, with nationally appointed administrators, working through regional assistants, who cooperate in varying degrees with local officials? Or, finally, will there be a return to our history-tested balance of local, state and national governments? I favor the last choice as the best. Further, I think that the better the job which the state governments do now, on a strictly war program, the more will the people want them to resume greater responsibility in peace-time.

But can they function in the fields where they can serve best if the federal government taps the principal sources of revenue and constantly makes it more difficult for them to collect enough taxes to carry on? Can they, in fact, continue to exist at all if this trend persists?

The federal government, for example, builds housing which is tax

free. The law provides, to be sure, that the administrator *may* pay to the cities in which these projects are located a sum equivalent to what the taxes would be if the property were in private hands. Unfortunately, he doesn't, as we have learned in Massachusetts, and a double burden falls on the city or state. Not only does the local unit fail to get the taxes rightfully due it; it must look for revenue elsewhere to build schools for the children in the housing projects, pave streets, and so on. A similar problem arises with war factories built and owned by the federal government. They, too, pay no local taxes. The revenue involved is tremendous when you consider that the federal government, according to a recent report, has taken from the tax rolls of the states an area equal to that of all the Atlantic Coast states plus West Virginia and Ohio, including all buildings and improvements on the land. This, I admit, *may be* justified in the war emergency, but it will raise many grave problems if not corrected in peace-time.

Clearly, a line has to be drawn somewhere. Certain sources of revenue should be the sole province of the state and local governments, while others properly belong to the national government. Some may

rightfully belong to either. An unbiased study of the whole subject should be made and a definite policy adopted, *not just talked about*.

Industry must not be taxed to extinction. It must be permitted to accumulate sufficient reserves for deferred maintenance, alterations and depreciation from hard war service. Otherwise it will never be able to rebuild to peace-time service and provide jobs. In no case must taxes be permitted to drain a man's earnings to the point where they rob him of his incentive to work and get ahead.

IV

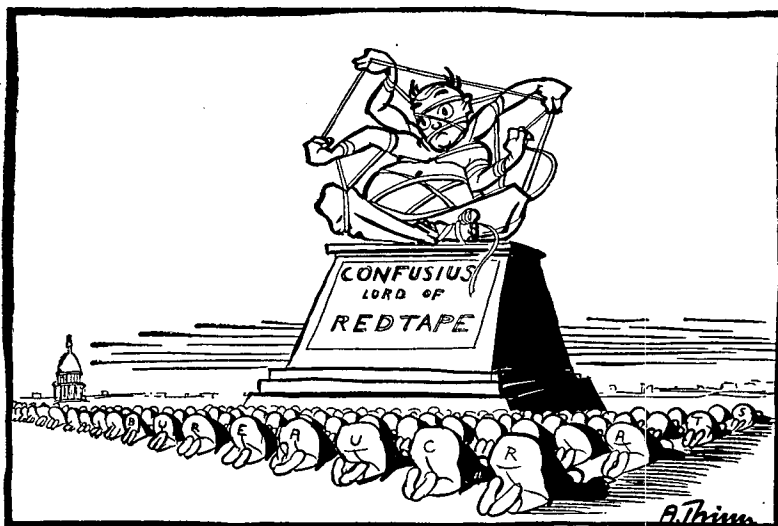
The great personal virtues extolled by Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln must be revived. The country was built from the bottom up and not from the top down. Let us not reverse the direction. Always we must bear in mind the needs of the individual citizen, the common man. He must feel, and truthfully, that *he* is the most important consideration in his government's mind, not the other way around. And on election day he will mark his ballot in accordance with this principle, which is basic with our democracy. Patriotism is stronger than policing.

If the Republican Party will pay close attention to the needs and wishes of the average citizen, it will merit and win his approbation. It has a great opportunity. Its power as the minority party is tremendous. Half the governorships of the nation are at present held by Republicans, and in these twenty-four Republican states reside nearly two-thirds of the whole population. There are plenty of progressive, experienced Republican leaders in private as well as public life who are capable of assuming responsibility in local, state and national affairs.

The American people are look-

ing to them for sound leadership. But they insist on the truth. They will take come what may. They don't want procrastination and political sidestepping.

If this country can go all out for war, it can go all out for peace. So let us tackle our peace problems now with the same fighting spirit that is bringing doom to the Axis. Let us look first to complete victory; then beyond victory abroad to victory at home and peace in the world for more than one generation to come. We can have it if we all work together for it. The average man and woman prays for it and will do his or her part to get it.



Worship in Washington

INSIDE POLAND TODAY

BY LEON DENNEN

This is the story of life in Poland in the fifth year of Nazi domination as told to me by a liaison agent of the great Polish underground movement who recently arrived in this country. I am not at liberty to identify this brave man lest his own life and the safety of his comrades be jeopardized. But this secret emissary is personally known to the highest government officials both in Washington and in London, with whom he has conferred, as well as to the editors of THE AMERICAN MERCURY.

For two days, hours at a stretch, I recorded his detailed story. He spoke deliberately and unemotionally. Not once did he refer to his own heroic exploits, which are indeed beyond the imagination of the average person living under normal conditions. Most of what he had to say must remain secret until the Nazis are expelled from his country. But his account of how people actually live under Nazi rule in Poland today can be published. It is given here substantially as he told it to me. — L. D.

How do the Polish people manage to go on living under the Nazi heel? The answer is simple: when there is a strong desire to live there seems to be no end to what low level human needs can be reduced. In the face of general misfortune and misery, people who in normal times are selfish individualists somehow grow closer together. Mutual aid, sacrifice, daring become an everyday way of living.

This is what happened in Poland. Every waking moment, every ounce of our energy is devoted to

only one purpose — finding something to eat. And when one is lucky and manages to get hold of some food, one invariably shares it with one's neighbor. Thus the survivors manage to exist in a condition of semi-starvation.

Poland, you must remember, is a besieged country. Everything is under tight German control. Most of the large industrial plants have been taken over by the invaders. Poles work in them under conditions of virtual slavery. Small and medium-sized industrial enterprises

are still operated by their original owners, although these, too, are under strict supervision of Nazi agents. In all Polish cities, walls and fences are covered with posters urging people to go to work in Germany. Smiling faces, pictures of clean and comfortable lodgings, enticing menus, promises of ration cards for clothes and many other inducements are offered to tempt the starving Poles into registering for work. The smiling, well-dressed figures on the posters contrast with the shabby, hungry-looking and depressed people who move silently to and from work.

Warsaw still bears the scars of the horrible air bombing to which the Germans subjected it in 1939; ruined, burned buildings everywhere. No one has taken the trouble to remove the *débris*. Most of the stores on Marszalkowska Street and in other business sections are closed. Those still open contain pitifully little merchandise. Clothing has been unavailable in Poland since the Germans invaded the country. All cloth is confiscated and shipped to the Reich. The few streetcars still running are crowded to capacity. There is no other civilian traffic. All *drozhy* and taxis are used for military purposes.

The German terror in Poland has been tempered only by the

Nazis' need to maintain a certain level of production for war and consumption goods. They treat the country as a reservoir of slave labor. The manpower needed by German industry is secured by methods worthy of the "black continent" slave hunts of bygone days. In the cities, the most horrifying scenes occur during the periodic street "round-ups" which are carried out on a vast scale. Then a stampede occurs, with men, women and children running frantically in all directions. But it doesn't last long. Soon the streets are cleared and the ominous silence reigns again. In the month of July 1942, in a street "round-up" in Warsaw, on Sunday, when the people were returning from the churches, the Germans arrested 35,000 men and women. It is estimated that close to two million Poles thus rounded up have been deported to the Reich for forced labor. The majority of Poles, however, in order to exist, must slave for the Germans in Poland proper.

The atmosphere in the Polish cities is permeated with fear and terror. Except for German military bands, little music is played. One seldom hears laughter or song. Only drunken German soldiers and Gestapo men sing in the streets. But there is very little contact between the occupying forces and the popu-

lation. Few Poles would compromise themselves by cooperating with the enemy. Some, to be sure, are forced to do some dirty jobs for the Germans but no one ever does them willingly. Besides, most Poles are aware of the existence of underground courts which mete out death sentences to collaborationists and traitors. There has not been a single instance where a sentence of death has not been carried out.

The Germans in Poland are completely isolated and badly frightened. All German soldiers who pass through Warsaw receive from their superiors cards with the following warning: "Be on your guard. There is danger of attack. Watch your arms and equipment. Do not go out alone after dusk." As a precaution the Nazi authorities have piled up huge stocks of barbed wire. These are held in readiness at various important points in Warsaw: on the sidewalks of Miodowa Street, before the Bruehl Palace near Wierzbowa Street, in front of many other German offices and railroad stations. German sentinels at the gates of provincial towns are now equipped with machine guns. Everywhere German railroad officials, employes and workers have been ordered to live within restricted areas for their own safety.

Social life is practically non-ex-

istent. People meet in houses, and in the churches on Sunday. Within the past months the Nazis commenced a new campaign of terror against Polish priests. Priests who have refused to comply with the Nazi demand that they deliver sermons calling on Poles "to fulfill the Christian duty of replacing at work those Germans who are defending the honor of Europe" have been put in concentration camps. In Oswiecim alone, the biggest Nazi prison in Poland, 1,500 priests have died of maltreatment. Hundreds of others have been executed.

II

The food situation is particularly critical in the cities. The meager rations allowed Poles by the invaders are not sufficient for bare survival. In the actual distribution of these rations the Germans adhere strictly to their theory that the "master race" must eat first. Only after the "supermen" are fed comes the turn of the "subhumans," as the Gentile Polish population is designated by the Nazis. The Jewish population receives no rations at all.

The average city inhabitant who is "gainfully" employed receives 250 grams of a very inferior bread for two days; 150 grams of mar-

malade made of beets or carrots for ten days; fifty kilograms of potatoes and fifty kilograms of coal for an entire year.¹ In 1942 we received no coal at all. Complete starvation can thus be avoided only by buying food on the black market at fantastically exorbitant prices, from eighteen to twenty-five times higher than in pre-war times. The prices of essential foodstuffs in the black markets soared by 1943 to such sums as: 1 lb. of wheat flour — 18 zlotys (\$3.60); 1 lb. of butter (when available at all) — 60 zlotys (\$12.00); 1 lb. of pork — 40 zlotys (\$8.00) and 1 lb. of apples or pears — 8 zlotys (\$1.60).

To realize what such prices mean, you must remember that wages and salaries are practically on the pre-war level and frequently lower. The average wage of a Pole is from 250 to 450 zlotys (from \$48.00 to \$94.00) *a month*. According to a decree by the Nazi Governor General of Poland, no Pole, no matter what his job or duties, is permitted to earn more than 450 zlotys monthly. But to maintain even the barest existence — to eat bread three times a day, potatoes, and from time to time some margarine and fats — one needs at least 1,200 zlotys a month. Thus only the

strongest manage to survive. The mortality rate has become catastrophic. This, coupled with the cold-blooded Nazi campaign of extermination, means that millions of Poles — not counting close to two million Jews — have already perished since the Nazis came.

The existence of the black market is of course known to the German authorities and even encouraged, since they are its greatest beneficiaries. One thing must be made clear; the German soldiers of 1943 have not the faintest resemblance to the conquering Nazi "heroes" of 1939. When I left Poland I could see unmistakable and increasing signs of demoralization. The average German soldier or official no longer believes in the likelihood of a prolonged stay on Polish soil and has therefore embarked upon a policy of wholesale and indiscriminate looting. The black market affords the small officials, policemen and special agents an opportunity to exact bribes, confiscate goods and practice other forms of petty robbery. Bribery and corruption, unheard of in 1939 or 1940, have now become rampant among the German invaders.

So panicky have the Germans become lately that the main desire of many of them seems to be to convince us that they have not

¹ About 450 grams = 1 pound; 1 kilogram = 2½ pounds.

taken any personal part in Gestapo terror. Many of them believe, too, that the dreaded Polish underground has divided the German soldiers into three categories: (1) those who will be shot immediately after the German collapse; (2) those who will be placed in concentration camps and given the same rigorous treatment now applied by the Gestapo to imprisoned Poles; and (3) those who will be allowed to return home. The Polish underground, naturally, is encouraging this theory. Despite steady streams of propaganda issued by the Nazi administration, many German soldiers are therefore openly trying to persuade Poles who will listen to them that they belong in the *third* category. Occupation authorities are at their wits' end for means to combat this dangerous breakdown in German morale.

In the villages conditions were somewhat more tolerable than in urban areas in 1939 and in the early part of 1940. At the beginning the Nazis had hoped to win over the peasantry to their side. They filled the villages with all sorts of "agricultural instructors" and special farm agents for purposes of indoctrination. But at the end of 1940 when the villages commenced to be active politically, taking a leading part in our underground move-

ment, the situation changed drastically.

German terror in the villages has become almost unbearable. But here again there is no end to human, particularly native peasant, ingenuity when there is a strong desire to live. In the latter part of 1940 the German authorities issued a decree prohibiting the delivery of agricultural products to the cities. Immediately smuggling of food became the rule rather than the exception. Secret "cooperatives" sprang up almost overnight, in which city inhabitants and peasants combined in a vast food-smuggling organization.

The methods of this food-smuggling will indeed remain historic examples of the shrewdness and courage of the typical peasant. In the face of torture and perhaps death he plays a cat-and-mouse game with the German officials. I have watched many police and Gestapo raids on trains. Apparently no one could possibly make a more thorough search. Every scrap of food destined for the city would be confiscated. And yet, after the departure of the police, at some suburban station, innocent-looking peasants and city people would alight with bundles, packages and valises crammed with food.

But the picture in the villages is

very sombre. The Germans have made estimates and taken stock of the standing crops, of the quantities of milk produced, of livestock and fowl, and taxed the villages far in excess of capacity. Particularly horrible is their enforcement of *collective responsibility* for individual actions upon entire village communities. Whereas in the cities the Nazis round up as hostages men and women in the streets unknown to each other, in the villages they "nominate" for a period of four or five months some of the best known and most respected teachers, priests, landowners and frequently children. If in the area of the given village some act of disloyalty towards the Nazis is committed, these hostages are publicly hanged. The fact that the peasant knows that as a result of his resistance to the invader his brother, priest or neighbor might be hanged hampers his activities. Because of this we have been obliged to organize regular armed divisions of the underground to perform acts of sabotage, terror and diversion in places where they are strangers, so that the hostages are not personally known to them. Sensitivity to German terror is thus in some measure reduced.

It is chiefly in the villages, too, that the Germans are "recruiting"

Polish girls for their army houses of prostitution. The number of village girls kidnapped for this purpose runs into tens of thousands.

III

German terror is what might be described as of a mass or wholesale character. It is typical of German mentality that reprisals are directed not only against individual victims but against groups. If a doctor in some town is arrested for underground activity, all other doctors in that town are likely to be rounded up as well. If an illegal press, arms or illegal literature are found in a house, all men within a radius of twenty to forty blocks are likely to be taken into custody.

This type of terror is not as thorough as the Germans suppose. It is the easiest to counteract because its effect is to wipe out the distinction between innocent and guilty. The timid man or the traitor is no safer than the militant enemy of the invaders. The Polish underground movement has been functioning since the first day of the German attack, and it has behind it a tradition of one hundred and thirty years of struggle against three invaders. Some of our leaders learned their job in the underground

ago as 1905! We have therefore worked out effective methods for countering and often nullifying the German system of terror.

It may sound paradoxical but it is true that a Pole active in the underground is better protected against the Germans than an ordinary, passive Pole. He takes precautions, receives timely warnings, has organized help, whereas the timid souls are hopelessly exposed to the terror system. It is a fact that the number of victims among the general population is disproportionately higher than among the underground workers.

The Nazis are particularly active in the attempt to demoralize the Polish youth. By corrupting the moral basis of our youngsters they think they can destroy the Polish nation at its very roots. Hence they carry on a great "educational" campaign among our boys and girls against traditional morality and ethics. There are special papers and pamphlets, richly illustrated and almost always pornographic. The invaders have opened cinema houses showing erotic films along with political propaganda films. In almost every town they have opened halls which are a combination of entertainment and brothels, and in many towns there are outright brothels reserved for Polish boys.

Considering the difficult economic condition of Polish youth, the fact that they are mostly without family care and that there is not a single high school or university on Polish territory, the campaign of demoralization has been strikingly unsuccessful. However, we were fearful for the future. That is why our underground organization is now also organizing illegal high schools and universities which will be honored by our government and educational authorities when our country is liberated. We are also using our young people more and more in underground work.

Some months ago, disguised as a special policeman attached to the Nazi forces, I visited the town of Belzec where the Nazis are executing daily thousands of Jews — old and young, men, women and children — and burning their corpses at huge stakes. I shall not go now into the details of this nightmare which will haunt me for the rest of my life. I have reported it to the Polish Government in London which has publicized it widely.

But it was on this occasion that I got into conversation with a middle-aged German officer who was supervising the executions. Pretending to be a collaborator of the Germans and loyal to their cause, I asked him why the Nazis persecuted

so brutally the Poles and the Jews. I complained that this terror prevented any sort of understanding between the Polish and German nations. His reply was typical. "We are brutal," he said, "not because we think this the best way to handle the Poles, but because we think it necessary for our youth to practice brutality. The Führer wants an arrogant, insensitive German youth, and Poland is one of the places where we can train men in these virtues. We are steeling the character of our young men. We must train a generation brutal enough to control the whole world."

The truth is far from this Nazi version. The terror does not "steel" the Germans but undermines them. I can testify, on the basis of close contact, that the majority of the Germans in Poland are morally weak. Irrespective of rank or type of service, they are interested in loot and fall ready prey to bribery. The German Governor General

was even forced to arrest the Governor of the Lwow district, a Nazi named Lash, for fraud and theft.

Frequently the Germans serve our underground cause, consciously or unwittingly. Not because they are disillusioned with the Nazi cause, but because they are greedy for money. In many cases it is also because they fear us and hope that we will show them mercy after Germany is defeated. Perhaps they are right. Perhaps our people, when the times comes, will be more merciful to the Germans than they are to us.

In any case, we are ready for the German collapse. When that day comes, all our institutions — our secret Parliament composed of all pre-war democratic parties of Poland, which functions in close contact with the Polish Government in London, our Army and underground municipal councils — will simply emerge from the underground and continue openly their work of administering the country.



Prophecy

Many a blow is dealt at the Axis.

It does not move, but, in the end, it breaks.

—GOETHE: *Zahme Xenien*

THEY FIGHT WITH CAMERAS

BY W. L. WHITE

I WANTED to talk to Lieutenant Colonel Karl Polifka because of an Air Force legend about him which has spread from Australia to Sicily and is as follows: One day Polifka was flying over New Guinea taking pictures of the Jap set-up at Buna when he was suddenly attacked by a Zero. Now remember that the colonel is an aerial photographer, and that his plane carries no guns. He jerked back the stick, went into a steep climb, laid over on his back and, coming down behind, pushed against the edge of the Zero's right wing with his propeller until the blades chewed into it as you might buzz-saw a matchbox with an electric fan. The Zero went spinning down into Buna Harbor. Polifka finished his photographic run, and then went back to Moresby to have his blades straightened.

He denies it. ("No," says Pol-

ifka, and then "Hell, no! It wasn't me!") But he's the kind of pilot about whom such legends grow.

The army said I could see him — and just as I was leaving came a final order.

"Sitting at the desk next to Polifka," they explained, "will be another colonel you are sure to recognize from his pictures. Just back from Africa, he's one of the best officers we've got. But remember this; you can't use his name."

"Why not?"

"Because of who he is," they said. "If we told only half of what he's done, they'd say we were bragging him up. So if you quote him he's got to be nameless."

The two colonels, at desks side by side, were both blond, blue-eyed and in their early thirties. Polifka, plump, round-faced, jolly;

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the Nameless Colonel's face, quick, intense and with that familiar profile.

"The first thing to know about aerial reconnaissance," said Polifka, "is something I think Kipling said: 'He travels fastest who travels alone.' That's us. Because the biggest formation you ever get in recco is just one man in one plane."

"And the boys have got to know plenty," added the Nameless Colonel. "To get to his target, the recco pilot must know everything a navigator knows. He must make a run as accurate as any a bombardier makes. To escape alive from an attack without guns, he's got to know every flying trick a fighter pilot ever uses."

"But don't feel too sorry for him," insisted Polifka, "because he's flying a P-38 — the fastest, hottest plane in the air. When they use them for recco they take out the guns and ammunition and the decreased weight adds forty or fifty miles to their speed."

"Then they put in at least three cameras," said the Nameless Colonel. "One in the nose which shoots straight down, and one on each side, at an angle, so the pictures cover the earth below from horizon to horizon. They set the shutter speed of your cameras before you start, so all you do to take the pictures

is press the red button on the end of your stick, just like a fighter pilot firing his guns.

"First they'll probably want a map of the entire region, and you have to fly back and forth like you were plowing a field, through the flak. If you're lucky and have open weather, you can take these from about 30,000. Next they'll give you a specific target, say, an enemy airfield. You may have to come in low so that your picture will be just as the field will look to our paratroopers when they bail out above it at 800 feet. Each man needs a copy to help him get to the assembly points — I suppose after they pull the cord, they study them on the way down.

"Or you go over at night and drop flash-bombs. They're set to explode at 1500 feet, the rays from the flash hitting a photo-electric cell in the plane's bottom which opens the camera shutter for the picture."

"And it's damn dangerous, too," Polifka pointed out. "When you're loaded with those magnesium flash-bombs you never forget that if just one little hunk of flak hits the right place, you explode like a match-head."

"You asked about guns," said the Nameless Colonel. "If we let our boys have them, it would be

too much of a temptation for the pilot to do his bit in the war. He'd forget his pictures and stop to dog-fight. We want pictures, not heroes."

"Not having guns isn't too bad, though," said Polifka. "When you get in one of those jamborees with something chasing you and another fighter squadron attacking from in front, all you do is pick one of the lead planes and decide that's where you're going through. You find they always move out of the way to let you by — even a Jap."

"There are lots of ways of getting rid of fighters. One day over Rabaul a whole smear of Zeros got my altitude. Supercharger trouble cut my speed, and looking back I could see they were gaining, twenty-three of them."

"Then just ahead of me I see a formation approaching and realize it's Ken Hobson's 19th Bombardment Group, so I have a bright idea. Ken's boys are keeping station beautifully — their big Fortresses regular as the teeth on a comb and not much further apart, and I decide I'll make Ken a little Xmas present of my Zeros. I have more than any reasonable man would need. So I head right for Ken with these twenty-three Zeros after me and I fly right between two of his Forts."

"Ken's gunners shoot down seventeen flammers of the twenty-three. The boys tell me later that for a minute Ken is sore as hell at me for scraping all those Zeros off on his pretty 19th Bombardment Group, but then he realizes I don't have any guns, and by the time he gets back to base he is all smiles. 'That's the stuff,' he tells me, 'don't let anybody treat you mean. Just come to papa.'"

II

"In Africa," said the Nameless Colonel, "George Humbrecht was one of our best recco boys. One day he was returning from a mission, losing altitude for his landing, when he had to pass through a thin overcast layer at about 18,000 feet. George says when he came down into the clear, still about twelve miles from home, he found he'd dropped his big ugly behind right into the middle of two Axis formations. Eight FW 190s loaded with light bombs, and 30 Messerschmidt 109s."

"When the FW 190s saw George they figured he was the first of an attacking squadron, so they got scared and jettisoned their bombs," said Polifka. "But when they saw it was only one plane, they all turned in to exterminate him."

"He went into 'violent evasive tactics,' as we say," continued the Nameless Colonel, "and for fifteen minutes eluded them, meanwhile hollering for Spitfires over his interphones, and maneuvering the Jerries nearer to his home field. Finally two of them came in on him from behind. One he dodged; the other placed twenty cannon shots on his ailerons, hydraulics and instrument panel."

"He went down smoking," said Polifka, "but managed to land her sidewise on the runway (it scared hell out of the British who thought it was just a normal American landing). How many fighter pilots do you know who could have survived those fifteen minutes unarmed?"

"And Frank Dunn," said the Nameless Colonel. "His specialty was low obliques, where you come down to 100 feet and run like hell just over the water alongside an enemy beach while they pop it at you like a tin duck in a shooting gallery! You take pictures out of the side window so the boys in the landing barges can have a panorama of the whole beach. 'Dicing missions,' the British call 'em. Because you gamble with your life, I guess."

"Dunn has a rare sense of humor," said Polifka. "One day they sent him out to Cagliari in Sar-

dinia. The weather was so heavy he had to dive in at very low altitude. It brought him out right on top of an Axis airfield where a mess of planes were circling to land.

"Dunn says he didn't want to be conspicuous, so he circled too. They all eyed him, but they were so mixed up nobody fired, and finally he saw his chance to pull out over the city.

"He got over the railway station just as a train was coming in. He had some empty gas tanks it was time to jettison, and figuring to have a little fun, he came lower and cut them loose right over the train. Boy, it certainly worked! They came down with a hell of a clang on the roof of the car just back of the engine and Dunn could see the engineer bailing out of his cab, and most of the passengers through the windows. Dunn says that was one train that really came into the station — and then curled up and lay down inside. He laughed for a month about it — showing pictures of the engineer bailing out. But our bombers were able to base a strike on his other pictures, and he got the DFC for it."

"Funny thing happened when we were prepping Rome before the big raid," said the Nameless Colonel. "Leon Grey was making his photographic run at 24,000 when

two Italian fighters — Macchi 202s — came in on him, one from each side. So Grey suddenly pulled up — yanked her back in his lap just as they opened fire, and one of those Macchis shot the other one down. Grey laughed about it all the way home!”

“Alex Guerry is another recco pilot who doesn’t need guns,” said Polifka. “One day he was stooging around at low altitude in the South Pacific when a Nip patrol of four Zero float planes dived onto him. Those float planes are slow and clumsy, and Guerry was so damned mad at their nerve that he started buzzing them — diving down on them, coming so close it scared the liver out of them. A P-38 is so hot it will drive a Zero crazy. Guerry ended up by forcing all of them down on the water. As the last one came down Guerry swooped low and swooshed him with his propeller wash, which turned the Nip over. When Guerry came in all excited and an hour late, I gave him hell for it, because G2 insisted there were no float planes around. But next day when Guerry’s pictures were developed there they all were — and one upside down.”

“And now,” said the Nameless Colonel looking at Polifka with a grin, “if you don’t tell him about your war wound, I will.”

“Oh, that,” said Polifka, also grinning. “Very curious wound. One day I was stooging around on the old milk run over Lae and Salamaua, when I looked back and saw a whole pile of what I assumed were Zeros in formation, flying about 500 feet above me.

“Just then they dived, and so did I, watching the air speed indicator climb well past 300. Such a diving speed usually leaves Zeros out, because above it their wings come off. I was just turning around to laugh at them when about a bushel of tracers came whizzing past me and I looked back to see that they were still on my tail, within range and gaining. I saw something else too. They weren’t Zeros — they were Focke-Wulfs! Don’t ask me where the Japs got them — maybe built them from German plans.

“I went back into the dive and on down. The indicator needle climbed to 400 and then 500. And that’s a speed. I got away from the Japs, but I was afraid now my own wings would come off. So I tried to pull out. But the stick seemed to be set in concrete.

“Finally I made it. But as I pulled out, I could feel my own insides coming out of my bottom.”

“What happens,” said the Nameless Colonel, “is that *you* pull out

of the dive, but your insides keep on going straight down."

"All I know," said Polifka, "is that the dive left two inches of raw intestine turned inside out in my pants. When I got back to base the medical officer packed it in opium ointment and gave me a sanitary napkin to wear. But since I had no pictures I had no proof of combat, and out there they don't give you medals just for the piles."

At which point the telephone rang and the Nameless Colonel, answering it, hastily left the room on some War Department summons. When the door had closed behind him, Polifka said:

"There's a fine officer. You heard him tell about how some of his boys like to go out on those dicing missions skimming along the beaches through the ack-ack fire? What he'd never tell you is that they are also a specialty of his. That's why his boys are nuts about their Old Man, as they call him. He doesn't order them out, he *leads* them. They know he will never send a man on a mission he wouldn't fly himself. In combat he has all the guts in the world and his boys will tell you he would have had the DSM long ago if his dad didn't happen to be just who and what he is."



Therefrom from Wherefrom

Extract from an OPA regulation, as published in the Federal Register of July 29, Page 10559:

"Part 1351 — Food and food products (MPR 319, Amdt 5), certain baking products.

"Maximum price regulation 319 is amended in the following respects:

"1. Section 1351.1918 (a) (7) is amended to read as follows: "

"(7) All commodities listed in appendix A are those known to the trade as such excepting therefrom such thereof, if any, while subject to another regulation."

► *The city is headquarters for incipient American fascism.*

CHICAGO, THE MUNICH OF AMERICA

BY KERMIT D. SMALL AND VAN ALLEN BRADLEY, JR.

FASCIST is a dangerous word now that we are at war against fascism, so they call themselves "nationalists." But they give this word the same sinister shadings that it has in the Axis lexicon. They applaud when speakers shout: "Let's put an end to the hypocritical cant about democracy!" Sly references to international bankers, Asiatic hordes and Americans with Jewish names throw them into orgiastic frenzies of hatred. They buy and avidly soak up slogan-logged little magazines exhorting to vigilance and action against aliens, Jews, the British, Russians, the "Screw Deal" in Washington, the leeches in Wall Street, and assorted "perils" and "menaces."

Night after night they go in droves to the Engineering Building on Wacker Drive, to Kimball Hall at Wabash and Jackson, to the Mural Room at the Hotel Morrison, to other meeting places. First generation Germans who still speak

with guttural accents. Irish-Americans who hate Britain more than Hitler. Bitter, frustrated, unhappy "mothers" on the prowl for scapegoats. Neurotics, paranoiacs, but above all, the multitude of simple, confused people annoyed by the draft and wartime hardships who need to hate something, anything, lustily.

Practically every self-styled "nationalist" group today has its headquarters in Chicago. There is an array of Committees, Plans, Institutes of changing names but unchanging ideas. Under the shielding wings of the *Chicago Tribune* they brew poisons that seep to the whole midwest and to the rest of the country in papers, pamphlets, smudged mimeograph services, and touring orators. Despite jealousies and competition for suckers, there is a fraternal sharing of speakers, especially if they are "respectables" from the halls of Congress. The same faces are in all audiences.

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the same "plots" and "menaces" touch off hysteria.

Chicago, the birthplace of the German-American Bund and scene of the greatest wartime investigation of seditious activities, tends to become the hate center of the nation and staff headquarters for incipient American fascism. It may be accident, it may be geography. But somehow the political climate of the great midwestern capital has been propitious for hatemongers. Back in the 1920's there was Mayor Big Bill Thompson announcing to delighted thousands that he would "punch King George in the nose," and there was Major General Cherep-Spiridovich distributing his anti-Semitic book *Secret World Government or the Hidden Hand*.

Chicago's large German population supported an organization called Friends of the Hitler Movement even before Adolf came to power. Captain Victor de Kayville founded *The American Gentile* in Chicago as the hoped-for American version of Julius Streicher's *Der Stuermer*. And American-born propagandists with the authentic Goebbels touch — Elizabeth Dilling, Harry Jung, Gertrude Coogan, Newton Jenkins, Homer Maertz, etc. — wrote and orated prolifically from Chicago and out of Chicago.

There is something in the restless, pulsating atmosphere of Chicago which seems to breed violence, physical and ideological. The prohibition era gangs came out of its fly-blown suburbs. Jazz took root in the cheap dance halls and saloons of its tight-packed middle districts. The peculiar violence of the Irish, celebrated by James T. Farrell, flourishes on the sprawling South Side. Chicago has its Negro problem, too: miles of it stretched along jam-packed South Side streets, within commuting distance of Chicago's dirty work in the West Side stockyards and south shore steel mills.

Of course, there is the larger and more important Chicago that has theatres second only to New York's, a fine symphony orchestra, two of the world's leading universities, and a robust liberal movement. But the city has remained, for all that, a tough frontier town in temper, the most ruggedly individualistic of all American cities.

The problem of the Chicago *Tribune* is like the classic puzzle as to which came first, the chicken or the egg. Colonel Robert R. McCormick's paper is both a symptom and a cause. But whatever the answer, the simple fact is that the paper helps to make the city a congenial habitat for the fascist ani-

mal. It not only acts as mouthpiece and moral sponsor for Chicago "nationalists" but attracts samples of the breed from other communities to its hospitable orbit. Some of the Chicago leaders have been in the hate racket for years. Mrs. Dilling, who honestly believes that even the Quakers are dangerous radicals, has been a tireless worker for the cause for a generation. Long before Pearl Harbor, William J. Grace ran his Citizens Keep America Out of War Committee and allowed Father Coughlin's *Social Justice* to be peddled at his meetings. But there are plenty of new names, too: Frederick Kister, William H. Stuart, Roger Faherty, P. H. Moynihan, Willis Overholser, George T. Foster and others. In addition, "nationalist" leaders from other parts of the country — men like the Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith of Detroit, Carl Mote of Indianapolis, Joe McWilliams of unsavory Yorkville fame — gravitate to Chicago.

Most alarming of all is the fact that this lurid "nationalism" compounded of race hatred, paranoia and plain reaction has been dignified by the public support of men in respected positions like Colonel McCormick, Senators Nye, Wheeler and Reynolds and a string of Congressmen — Paul Shafer, Clare

Hoffman, Stephen A. Day, John Rankin. Without doubt some of them mean well, within their lights and obsessions. They may be sincere isolationists eager to withdraw the USA from the war. But the fact remains they have chosen to serve as fronts for a movement that is candidly fascist where it is not merely crackpot. They have knowingly placed themselves at the head of mobs yelling for innocent blood to quench their hatreds and discontents.

II

Sparkplug of the Chicago "nationalist" movement is William J. Grace, a local attorney who has been particularly adept in drawing "respectable" isolationists into closer relations with outright pro-fascists. Grace describes himself as "no pussyfooter," and most Chicagoans will agree. "Cap'n Grace," as he is known around the Tribune Tower, asserts that British imperialists maneuvered us into the war and that our government is an "infamous" compound of "alien isms." As head of the Citizens Keep America Out of the War Committee he sent out literature carrying a picture of hundreds of coffins draped with American flags and captioned "Bundles FROM Britain."

The Committee went out of business when we entered the war, but Grace hasn't changed his views. He revamped his organization into a Citizens U.S.A. Committee and proceeded to present Anglophobes, anti-Semites, and Congressional "nationalists" to his meetings every Friday night. All the other little "nationalist" groups in the city, including pro-Hitler Germans, found a leader and a rallying point in the energetic Grace.

Grace waded into the Illinois Congressional campaign on the side of Day, the isolationist Representative who embarrassed decent Illinois Republicans by having a book put out by Flanders Hall, notorious pro-Nazi publishing house. Last May, Grace decided that his movement needed a political arm. With Senator Gerald P. Nye as principal speaker, he launched the so-called Republican Nationalist Revival Committee at a Morrison Hotel rally. The city's fascist phalanxes turned out to cheer. The Senator must have seen the literature that was being sold in the hall — literature which two grand juries have held to be seditious. And he must have been aware that the reception committee designated to greet him included Roger Faherty, prominent "nationalist," and Earl Southard, who was ousted in 1941 as

Illinois Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars because of his part in the leadership of the Citizens Keep America Out of War Committee.

It was at a subsequent meeting of this Republican Nationalist Revival that the McCormick-for-President boom was launched. Representative Paul Shafer, Michigan Republican, was a featured speaker and gave the Four Freedoms an hour's verbal beating. The air-conditioned Terrace Casino of the Morrison grew hot with excitement as speakers loaded abuse on everyone but Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito and called for the "draft" of the *Tribune* publisher as Republican standard-bearer. Among the delegates to this gathering were representatives of We, the Mothers, Mobilize for America — an organization which demanded a negotiated peace and a strike against sugar rationing three months after Pearl Harbor. Currently Grace is running both his Citizens U.S.A. Committee and the Republican Nationalist Revival Committee, though ex-Congressman P. H. Moynihan is president of the latter. Sooner or later everyone who is anyone in the city's incipient fascism shows up at Grace's meetings, either on the rostrum or in the vociferous audience.

One of the most active of the small-time leaders, of course, is Mrs. Dilling. Her Federal indictment for sedition hasn't put any brakes on her propaganda work. She still operates her Patriotic Research Bureau at 8 South Dearborn Street and sends out regularly long, venomous newsletters, crawling with religious hatred. Mrs. Dilling has been branching out too. She has told people of the midwest:

The Jews called Jesus a bastard and claimed that His Mother was immoral. . . . Internationalism and Judaism are fast getting hold of this country. . . . In the government the Jews and the Russians hold key places. . . . Franklin Roosevelt has ordered our New Testament taken away from our service men.

Late this July Mrs. Dilling was the main speaker at a meeting of the Constitutional Americans, a group run by George T. Foster and Mary Leach. The organization is new, but Mary Leach is not new to "the cause." For some time she has been one of Mrs. Dilling's lieutenants. Mrs. Dilling told the Constitutional Americans about her visit to Franco's forces during the Spanish Civil War, and showed pictures of small boys greeting her with the Hitler salute. This, she explained, is how "these happy little Christian boys" say "hello to the American lady."

On the fringes of Grace's move-

ment, cooperating with it and with the Dilling crowd, are Ralph Keeling and Willis Overholser, who run the Institute of American Economics. Keeling ran the Midwest Monetary Federation, progenitor of the present Institute. In pre-Pearl Harbor days the Federation hired the Hitler-heiling New York anti-Semite, Joe McWilliams, as "elocution" teacher and advertised his classes in *Social Justice*. After the Federation folded up, Keeling and Overholser joined Otto Brennemann and Donald McDaniel in launching the Institute. Brennemann and McDaniel are both under indictment for sedition, and it was Keeling who bailed Joe McWilliams out of a cell when the FBI arrested him as a draft dodger.

Keeling's association with the indicted men and with McWilliams hasn't impaired his prestige with the "respectables" from Capitol Hill in Washington. Only recently Clare Hoffman of Michigan addressed Keeling's group in Orchestra Hall, Chicago; "nationalists" from downstate Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin flocked to the happy gathering. Senator Burton K. Wheeler, too, was scheduled to address the Institute, but sent his regrets together with a promise to speak there "soon."

III

Naziphile Joe McWilliams had found that Father Coughlin's Christian Front was "pussyfooting" on the "Jewish issue," and had therefore organized his own "militant" society, the Christian Mobilizers. Touring Yorkville, the German section of Manhattan, back in 1940, he yelled:

Roosevelt is an amateur Englishman, a Jew, and the leader of the fifth column in this country. . . . I intend to get a huge following and run the government like a factory, appointing all the key men. I may not be President, but I will have absolute control.

But New York knew him too well, and became too hot for him in wartime. On departing he declared:

I was brought into this movement for one purpose: to make America Jew-conscious. I've done that. Lindbergh, Nye, Wheeler, Reynolds and the rest can carry on now. . . . I'll swing back into the saddle when the time is ripe. I'm going to travel — to start little fires all over the country so that they can burst spontaneously into a national flame that'll raze democracy to the ground.

His travels took him, unerringly, to Chicago. It was Keeling who introduced him to Alice Rand de Tarnowsky, the Chicago socialite who would rather spend her money on fighting communism and "global piffle" than on mink and diamonds. With de Tarnowsky money,

McWilliams set up swank offices at 327 North Michigan Avenue, hatched the Servicemen's Reconstruction Plan, a scheme designed to lure soldiers to the "nationalist" and anti-Jewish cause. McWilliams is offering each returning soldier \$7500 in government bonds and explains this largesse as follows: "The plan will keep the morale of these trained young men at a high enough level to smash a communist *coup d'état* at a moment's notice." Mrs. de Tarnowsky is a versatile woman. Under her maiden name of Alice Rand she edits a mimeographed, five-page sheet, the *Post-War Bulletin*, the tone of which is much the same week after week. In the June 26 issue, Germany was depicted as the victim of the war, not the aggressor, and the wars of the last eighty years were reviewed in an effort to prove that Germany has no historic urge toward world conquest.

Friends of the McWilliams-Tarnowsky combine and frequent callers at Citizens U.S.A. Committee rallies are Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Kister, comparatively new leaders in the "nationalist" line-up. Until his recent draft into the army, Kister hired a hall to give "book reviews." Last year he addressed meetings of the Patrick Henry Forum at the Hotel La-

Salle. One of the mouthpieces of the "nationalist" cause reported:

The applause which frequently interrupted the speaker [Kister] grew to tumultuous proportions when he declared that England cannot win this war but America can make herself invincible by refusing to be ruled by a British Prime Minister about to be deposed by his own nation.

In his spare time Kister acted as usher at Grace's meetings and attended McWilliams' meetings. Before leaving for the army Kister told a gathering of Constitutional Americans that as a soldier he would have to be loyal to the Commander-in-Chief, but expressed the hope that in 1944 Charles Lindbergh would become the Commander-in-Chief. The statement was greeted with wild enthusiasm.

The Kister influence has not been ended with his induction, for his spouse carries on. Introduced as "that gracious and adorable artist, Mrs. Frederick Kister," she leads the singing at meetings of We, the Mothers, Mobilize for America. Inspired by Mrs. Dilling, the Mothers before Pearl Harbor had "marched" to Washington to petition Congress to "keep us out of war" and to impeach the President. In November 1941, led by Mrs. Lyril Van Hyning and Mrs. Grace Keefe, the Mothers sent letters to the nearest of kin of sailors killed in

battles with German submarines exhorting them thus:

In the name of justice we ask you to call to account the real murderers of your loved one, the man who violated the Constitution of the United States by sending him into the war zone. . . . We beg you not to be deceived by propaganda into blaming a foreign power.

In other words, the good ladies exonerated the gentle Hitler. The Japanese attack did nothing to change their minds. We, the Mothers has not bothered, like some of the other groups, to burrow underground or to change its name. For a time the *Chicago Leader*, published by Fred R. Hunt & Sons, was the mouthpiece of this organization. At present the Mothers have a publication of their own, the *Woman's Voice*. It charges that the Roosevelt Administration "provoked and precipitated" the attack on Pearl Harbor and calls for a "halt on the present needless slaughter, by entering immediately into conferences for a negotiated peace." The Mothers declare vehemently that they want no "international bankers" at the peace conference. (In the "nationalist" lingo "international bankers," of course, is a euphemism for Jews.)

The Mothers are among the loudest and most tragic of the mal-adjusted creatures snared by the

fascist-minded leaders. Mostly middle-aged women of nondescript appearance, they turn out en masse at all important meetings, particularly if Wheeler, Nye, Gerald Smith or some other celebrity is scheduled. They distribute Dilling literature at Grace rallies. They murmur "The Jews!" with knowing and horrified certainty as speakers rant about looming perils.

When William H. Stuart, a Grace associate, leaves the platform of the Citizens U.S.A. Committee on Friday nights he plunges into a busy week. Stuart edits his own publication, *Heard and Seen*, which sets the pace for the Chicago faithful. His editorials reiterate that "the paramount issue is NATIONALISM vs. INTERNATIONALISM." He runs plugs *ad nauseum* for the two Grace organizations. Among the first to boom McCormick for President, Stuart also urges General Douglas MacArthur to become a candidate. The "MacArthur cult," vigorously disavowed by the general himself, is a familiar gadget in the "nationalist" bag of tricks. Stuart also runs weekly *Heard and Seen* Round-Table Luncheons at Eithel's Old Heidelberg Restaurant. Roger Faherty, one-time candidate for mayor of Chicago and a frequent ornament on the Citizens U.S.A. Committee

rostrum, seems to be Stuart's right-hand man.

A relatively new speaker at Grace's meetings is George Washington Robnett, publisher of *News and Views*. Launched in 1939 as an information service on radicalism for businessmen, the bulletin soon broadened its scope; out of it stemmed two organizations, the so-called Church League of America and the Midwest Council, both headed, of course, by Robnett. Ostensibly devoted to exposing communism, Robnett's bulletin and organizations took to citing Mrs. Dilling and Harry Jung, anti-Semitic leader of the American Vigilant Intelligence Federation, as "authorities." His present place on the "nationalist" bandwagon is not too surprising. Another newcomer to the "nationalist" cause is Dr. Albert J. Haake, who shows up at the Citizens U.S.A. Committee rantings and thereby, no doubt, embarrasses the decent people associated with him in the American Economic Foundation.

Earl Southard, secretary of the Citizens, has something of a record of his own. His admirers range over a wide area, and include William Kullgren, who is under indictment for sedition, and William Dudley Pelley, the minor Führer (now in prison) who said that "every true

American rejoices in an Axis victory even over our own forces." Pelley once ran a series of articles in his magazine praising Southard. After America entered the war, Southard joined Gerald L. K. Smith as an organizer for his American First Party.

Among Chicago's most esteemed "nationalist" out-of-towners are Gerald Smith and Carl Mote. Twice this year Smith put on Chicago revival meetings under the auspices of Grace's organizations. Mote, who doesn't conceal his belief that the Jews are at the bottom of all the world's ills, is president and general manager of the Northern Indiana Telephone Company. He denounces "tolerance," "social equality" and "minority rights." "Let's put an end to this hypocritical cant about democracy" is his formula.

But names and quotations cannot convey fully the spirit of that portion of Chicago which deserves recognition as the Munich of America. One must feel its pulse, hear its accent of hate, look into its inflamed eyes to recognize the fascist fervor that drives it.

Though numerically small, it is not a movement to be laughed

off. It is too intricately woven into the political fabric of Chicago, and besides, it has its extensions in dozens and scores of other American communities. In the difficult years of war and after-war adjustment ahead of the country, this movement represents a cancer in the American body politic. It does not hesitate in the midst of all-out sacrifice to lay upon our own country, rather than upon the enemy, the blame for the war. "If it hadn't been for the red-New Deal administration," Grace said recently, "we would never have gotten into this war. This does not minimize the attack which the Japanese, *they say*, made on Pearl Harbor." Quite candidly the movement is preparing to feast on trouble, to exploit difficulties, to foment mob frenzy, if and when an opportunity presents itself.

The "respectables" who play with this dynamite — publishers, Senators, Congressmen — must share the blame and the shame for the Munich of America, and for all the little Munichs throughout the land. Whatever their motives, they are lifting the morale of and providing a kind of cohesion to a vicious movement which otherwise might peter out in futility.



► *Our uniformed men borrow
from jive for their lingo.*

SERVICE MEN'S SLANG

BY ALBERT A. OSTROW

WHEN a man changes from *civvies* to a uniform he not only enters upon a different life but a different vocabulary. He finds there is a jargon in his new job of fighting that goes along naturally with his helmet, his weapon and his roomy shoes.

The time-honored lingo of the regular Army and Navy and the auxiliary services built up by preceding generations of warriors forms the basis of the modern American fighting man's lexicon, but he has brought it up to date with apt and colorful additions of his own. Made gag-wise by the radio and the movies he is a slicker phrase coiner than his predecessors and likes his slang punchy. For his taste it must also be unsentimental, disrespectful and like all strictly male talk, hard-boiled.

The education of the service man in the language of his new *trade* begins the moment he arrives at training camp. If he's in the Army he's referred to as a *yardbird*, often abbreviated to *YB*, an old Army term for camp-con-

fined newcomers. Or he may be called a *John*, from the "John Doe" on the sample recruiting forms — the British "Tommy Atkins" got his nickname the same way. If he's a naval recruit he's a *boot*, from the leggings he wears during training. And his camp is a *boot camp*.

Marines are *bellhops* and *girenes* to the bluejackets. Sailors are *swab jockies* and *seaweeds* to soldiers. While the men in khaki are *dog-faces* to those in the naval services. The infantry is *walkin' hell* and an infantryman a *blisterfoot*. Cavalrymen are *bowlegs* and members of the Air Force *skywinders*.

The recruit learns right off that the articles of war and the regulations are known as *the bible*, that a *housewife* is his sewing kit; a *nappy*, the camp barber; *cueballs*, the barber's clients; and a *chili bowl* or *G.I. trim*, a regulation haircut.

G.I., which stands for Government Issue is a popular phrase and generally means "regulation" or "Army approved." Girls provided for Army dances are *G.I. girls* and the dance itself a *G.I. hop*. The

standard yellow soap used for *polishing* (cleaning-up) is *G.I. soap*. Ashcans are *G.I. cans*. Water is *G.I. lemonade*.

Food or *chow* has traditionally been the cause of the man-in-uniform's loudest *gripes* (complaints). Though the quality of food is much better in this war than it ever has been, there's no hint of the improvement in the extensive glossary that covers the subject.

A cook has actually received a decoration for "distinguished service in the kitchen," but the odds are he's still known as a *belly robber*, *hashburner*, *slumburner* or *greasepot* to his grateful comrades. The fellow who usually manages to be at or near the head of the *chow line* is a *chow hound*. The mess hall is *the ptomaine domain* or *the Waldorf*.

Eating utensils are *mess gear*. Cream and sugar are *sidearms*; pepper and salt shakers, *lighthouses*; salt and pepper, *sand and dirt* or *sand and specks*; canned milk, *armored cow*, *armored heifer* or *city cow*; and ketchup, *blood*, *redeye*, *redlead* or *transfusion*.

Coffee is known variously as *battery acid*, *paint remover*, *Joe*, *blanko water*, *blackout*, *ink*, *bootleg* or *mud*. Bread is *punk* even when tasty. Stew is *slumgullion*, *slum* or *shackles*. And when it comes along

too often it's *S O S*, same old stew. Hash is *kennel rations*; creamed beef or chicken on toast, *cream on a shingle*; canned corn beef, still *corn willie* as in the last war; chicken, *crow* or *buzzard*; and turkey, *seagull*.

Other chow terms in popular use are: *baby food* for cereal; *blankets* or *collision mats* for pancakes; *cackle jelly* for eggs; *cat beer* for milk; *goldfish* for canned salmon; *grass* for salad; *hand grenades* or *wimpies* for hamburgers; *Irish grapes* for potatoes; *popeye* for spinach; *salve* for butter; *shimmy pudding* or *shivering liz* for jello; *side slip* for bread and butter; *strawberries* for prunes; *swamp seed* for rice; and *turkey* for practically any meat course.

The fellow who has a habit of stopping a plate *en route* to someone else and helping himself first is a *short stop*. Dishwashers are *china clippers*, *bubble dancers* or *pearl divers*. A *pot massager* helps the cook clean up. *Dirt bags* or *G-men* gather the garbage which is picked up by a *honey wagon*.

II

Eagle day is a big day because that's when *money bags* (the paymaster) makes his rounds with the *scandal sheet* (payroll). *Buscar* (borrowed

money) is paid off, nobody is *hurtin'* (broke) and everybody is *heeled* (solvent) again with a pocketful of *pocket lettuce*, *happy cabbage* or *soft money* (paper currency) and *white money* or *iron* (silver coins).

All look forward to *mail call*, hoping for *fan mail* (any kind of mail) but particularly a *sugar report* (a letter from the one and only). Waiting for mail is *sweatin'*. In the services you don't worry or wait, you *sweat* — for pay, leave, promotion, etc.

The new and proud possessor of chevrons is a *chevron polisher* or *dust dust*. The bearer of more than one stripe is known as a *zebra* and is said to be *stripe heavy*. Sergeants are also known as *third-lieutenants* and acting corporals as *Hollywood corporals* or *whistle jerks*.

The shoulder insignia of commissioned officers are *shoulder hardware*; the gold bars of a second-lieutenant, *didie pins*; a colonel's silver eagles, *chickens*. High ranking officers are *higher brass*. Identification tags are *dog tags*; service stripes, *hash marks*; and medals, *chest hardware*.

Every outfit has its *earbangers* (yes men), *buckers* or *handshakers* (those who try to curry favor with superiors), and *guardhouse lawyers* (those who hand out free advice). The recipient of that advice usu-

ally lands in *Barracks 13*, the *brig*, *mill*, *bull pen*, *playhouse* or *wire city* — all of which mean the guard house.

Hypochondriacs are *moaners* who make frequent visits to the *pill roller* (doctor), hoping to get sent to the *butcher shop* (hospital) or *ride the sickbook* (get soft duty). *Goldbricks* loaf on an assignment and generally scheme to get by the easy way. Tear-jerking alibis are *Mother Machrees* and complainers are advised to *tell it to the chaplain*. The chaplain's office is known as *the wailing wall* and the chaplain as *Holy Joe* or *sympathy issuer*.

Getting together for a talk is known as *batting the gums* or *shooting the breeze*. A guy who *sounds off* (talks too much) is told to *knock it off*. And if he is the hypercritical type he is said to be *slipping the clutch*. *She did?* means *say that over again*; and *got me pushed* is another way of saying *I don't know*.

The only enjoyable *fatigue duty* (hard work) in the Army is *bunk fatigue* (going to bed), also known as *spinning in*. Sleep is *blanket drill* — *sack drill* in the Navy, where a *sack* is a bed.

When he's free to *take off* (go to town) the service man changes into his *swanks* (best clothing). He may go on a *skirt patrol* or *play the fems* (hunt feminine company). If he

finds a *gadget* or *biddie* (girl) he likes they usually *shake a shimba* (go to a dance). There he tries a *snow job* on her (hands her a line) and if she falls for it she's been *snowed under*.

Or he may prefer to get together with his buddies and go to a *gas-house* (beer joint) and drink *tiger sweat* (beer). Later he *hits the road* (gets going) back to quarters so that he can get some *flying time* (still another expression for sleep) by the time the *blow boy* or *wind-jammer* (bugler) wakes him up for *jubilee* (reveille).

III

The teamwork of the services in combined operations has resulted in many of the slang expressions becoming common property. Many of those already mentioned are familiar to members of all the armed forces. Army lingo has gained a wider circulation than those of the naval services (Navy, Marines and Coast Guard) or the Air Force, which are more technical.

Here is some typical slang of the naval services: *Going salty* — trying to act like an old-timer; *snipes* — firemen; *woodbutcher* — carpenter's mate; *sun dodger* — sailmaker; *hooligan navy* — the Coast Guard; *sand pounder*, *dune leaper*, *bugalow*

sailor — a Coast Guardsman on shore duty; *freckles* — tobacco; *scuttlebut* — rumor; *scupper* — a lady of easy virtue; *ridge runner* — a Southerner; *German pomp* — a short haircut; *clamp down* — clean up; *going over the side* — liberty without a pass; *not very cozy* — unfriendly; *vessel man* — pot washer; *skivvies* — underwear; *can* — destroyer; *battilewagon* — battleship; *pig boat* — submarine; *tin fish* — torpedo; *hack driver* — chief petty officer; *pelican* — a big eater; *gedunk* — ice cream; *pogey bait* — candy; *airedale* — naval aviator; *Snafu* — politely translated as "situation normal; all fouled up," to indicate that things are not going too well.

American flying talk is heavily RAF in origin and also borrows from our enemies. *Strafe* (to attack troops from the air) and *flak* (anti-aircraft fire) are German.

Other popular expressions are: *ack-ack* — anti-aircraft fire; *scatter gun*, *shotgun* or *chatterbox* — anti-aircraft machine gun; *archies* — heavy anti-aircraft guns; *fireworks* — any anti-aircraft fire; *bend the throttle* — fly above normal cruising speed; *bandits* — enemy fighters; *Chinese landing* — a one wing low landing; *cockpit trouble* — when a wreck is the pilot's fault; *dodo*, *penguin* — a cadet who hasn't as

yet flown; *dopey crate* — a bum plane; *iron beam* — a railroad used as a guide; *wet beam* — a river used as a guide; *hangar pilot* — one who talks a good flight on the ground; *heap, bus, crate, job* — a plane; *hit the silk, bail out* — to make a parachute jump; *hot pilot, goopher, eagle* — a fighter pilot who is having success against the enemy; *hot*

crate, soup job — a fast plane; *hot-house* — turret; *office* — cockpit; *roger* — "okay, I get you"; *wash out* — to flunk a flying course; *prang* — a crash that could have been avoided. An *order of the prang* has been established for pilots who lose planes through carelessness. *Prang* has also come to mean a devastating air raid.



DARLING, THIS MUCH

BY KAYE STARBIRD

DARLING, this much I've learned to understand,
 And it has taken me a long, strange year,
 A year I reached but could not touch your hand
 And listened for your voice but could not hear.
 Often I walked along our road in spring,
 Silently asking strength, that I might bear
 To watch the leaves and flowers unravelling
 And feel the rain we loved and you not there.
 I thought I walked alone and wept that you
 Walked somewhere far as lonely and alone.
 I am much wiser now the year is through
 And you are still away. I should have known
 As I do now, there is no road or weather,
 However dark, we do not walk together.

HORIZONS OF SCIENCE

BY WALDEMAR KAEMPFERT

What's Wrong with Medical Practice?

As an individual member of the community the general practitioner of medicine — “family doctor” to you — is a decent fellow. He listens to the woes of his patients sympathetically, often gives sound advice on troubles that have nothing to do with health, tumbles out of bed at two in the morning in answer to an emergency call, waits patiently for his bills to be paid and does an immense amount of medical good without charging anything. But when he attends the meetings of his county medical society he is a changed man. His social outlook turns out to be that of the organization, which is to say that it is scarcely distinguishable from that of a plumbers’ union. The medicine that is discussed at meetings is sound enough, but the economics have nothing in common with what the people want. As a member of the medical party, so to speak, the doctor votes solidly with his colleagues for the preservation of an economic status which is centuries old and which is unable to meet the needs of a new age.

The medieval system in accordance with which physicians must practice by the fiat of their national organization, which is the American Medical Association; is based on the principle of charging what the traffic will bear. It is true that doctors reduce their fees for needy patients to less than cost. Though this may be in accordance with the Hippocratic oath that every medico takes when he graduates from a medical school it is unjust to him and to his patient.

Who likes to ask for charity? Because they dislike it very few of the 50,000,000 in this country who in normal times must live in families with an average income of less than \$1,000 a year ever consult a doctor unless the need of one is dire. As for the doctor, his income is at best precarious. If he resorts to laboratories and consultants to help him in his diagnoses, for which he must pay when he deals with the needy, he loses money. His decisions are inevitably affected. Yet the most important distinction between modern scientific medicine

and the kind practiced forty years ago lies in the appropriate use of laboratory methods and specialists. As a result the kind of medicine practiced in large areas of the country is no better than the kind that grandfather knew. There is still too much reliance on chest-thumping and listening to internal swishes and gurgles. It is about time that the old wheeze, "medicine is an art as well as a science," went the way of the high-wheel bicycle and the bustle. We want more science and less art in medicine.

II

In the frustration of scientific medicine the free choice of a physician is even guiltier than the fee-for-service system. In other words, organized medicine insists that the patient must have the right to choose his own doctor. This has a democratic ring, but it will not bear scrutiny. Doctors always insist on free choice; patients rarely do. It is argued that there is something peculiarly holy about the relationship of doctor to patient and that without free choice good medicine is impossible. There is no free choice in the wards and public clinics of municipal and incorporated charitable hospitals. Yet these institutions must be approved by

the American Medical Association and the American College of Surgeons to command respect. Either free choice is not essential in the proper practice of medicine or this approval is a gross deception. We have been hearing hosannas of praise about the way Army and Navy doctors, most of whom have been recruited from hospitals and private offices, are coping with diseases and of the miracles performed by plasma and the sulfa drugs at the front. But there is no free choice in the Army and Navy. Nor in the Mayo Clinic, though a patient may be referred to a particular Mayo doctor if he has been recommended to him.

The few studies made show that physicians are rarely chosen intelligently. Some one says, "I have the most wonderful doctor in the world. He cured me of my stomach trouble last winter. Better try him." Or the corner druggist recommends a particular physician for good business reasons. Few call up the local medical society or hospital for guidance. When these few do they are given the names of half a dozen medicos from whom a selection must be made, but with no indication of relative abilities. Old Dr. Jackson on the list may be a mediocrity doddering in his dotage, but so long as he is a member in

good standing of a county medical society he is supposed to be competent. The farmer and the mechanic do not know how to appraise him by consulting a medical directory and ascertaining when and where he graduated and whether or not he has any hospital connections.

You can bet a firkin of rationed butter against a tin whistle that the farmer or mechanic is likely to choose an incompetent as his physician. If this seems a wild assertion, read "Post Graduate Medical Education and the Needs of the General Practitioner," a pre-war report published by the State Medical Society of Michigan. There you will find that "nearly 42 per cent of the physicians [examined] were deficient in medical knowledge. In other words, almost half of the physicians were unable to pass satisfactorily twenty-nine practical medical questions." Two-thirds of those who failed had been out of medical school more than twenty-four years. You can imagine what the competence of good, old Dr. Jackson is likely to be. He may be old — but good?

Even if Dr. Jackson turns out to be a lively young man and generally qualified to practice medicine he cannot possibly know all that he should about thousands of af-

flictions, infirmities and abnormalities that range from the common cold to infantile paralysis, from lack of a hormone to a boil on the neck. Nor can he know all about the many scientific methods of diagnosis and treatment that have been devised in the last generation. Medicine is simply too big, too intricate, too ramified for the medico who practices in a private office.

Good physicians in the cities know all this and therefore send patients to specialists and laboratories at great expense. All these worthies and all these facilities should obviously be brought together under one roof, as they are in a medical center. Doctors should pool their knowledge and practice as a group — the principle so brilliantly applied in the Mayo Clinic. There is no reason why a medical center should not serve a whole county in these days of automobiles and buses, no reason why doctors should not be sent out from centers to pay home visits.

Group practice is nothing new. Back in President Hoover's time the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, headed by Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, stated that "medical service, both preventive and therapeutic, should be furnished largely by organized groups of physicians, dentists, nurses, phar-

macists and other associated personnel." These groups should be centered "preferably around a hospital for rendering complete home, office and hospital care" and "the costs of medical care placed on a group payment basis." The *Journal of the American Medical Association* editorially denounced the recommendations as "socialism and communism inciting to revolution."

III

Group practice generally assumes two forms. Doctors form an association and practice in their own clinics for profit, charging either what the traffic will bear or \$2 or \$3 a month on the prepayment plan, with service that varies widely in scope. Or citizens may form their own clinics, install their own salaried doctors and receive service either on a non-profit or a prepayment basis. The American Medical Association does not object to group practice as such, so long as the fee-for-service principle is adopted. Nor does it object to prepayment when there is free choice of physicians. But combine group practice with prepayment and county medical societies will convert themselves into Star Chambers, try the participating physicians and eject them if they fail to eat dirt.

Despite opposition, clinics in which specialists and consultants practice in groups on the prepayment plan, with the aid of laboratories, are growing in number. Some of these group clinics are bad; many are good. The bad could be made to raise their standard if they were supervised as hospitals are. But organized medicine will not budge. When Henry J. Kaiser decided to start a hospital for the group practice of medicine for his shipyard workers on the basis of fifty cents a week and applied to the state medical society for assistance in recruiting a competent staff he met not only with a refusal but with a strong intimation that his doctors would be declared non-essential and therefore liable for service in the armed forces.

What rankled particularly was Kaiser's plan to care not only for his workers but for their families. Since Kaiser rides over opposition like a tank in battle, he paid no attention. He built his hospitals, and for their fifty cents a week his men now get not only the best medical service but medicines too. And he makes his non-profit hospitals and clinics pay for themselves. To him health is something positive, like money in the bank. Other leaders of industries have similar enlightened views. They provide medical

care either free or at less than cost. Their doctors receive from \$2,500 to \$10,000 a year, depending on their term of employment, experience and rank. There are old-age pensions, paid vacations, even paid postgraduate courses.

IV

What does organized medicine offer as an alternative to prepaid group practice? Nothing but voluntary insurance for those who can pay something. A list of physicians is presented from which you may choose one. If your own is a member of the county medical society in good standing, his name will generally be added. Free choice must be upheld at all costs. You are charged in accordance with a scale of reduced fees until your cash benefit is exhausted. What happens then lies between you and the doctor. The system is fine for him because his bills are sure to be paid, but it guarantees nothing as to the kind of attention that you receive. Voluntary insurance based on free choice of physician must be inefficient because actuarial soundness must be placed above quality of medical care if bankruptcy is to be avoided. It does nothing for preventive medicine, which should be our mainstay.

What of compulsory health insurance? About forty-five nations have adopted it. Their experience is anything but gratifying, though they are medically better off in normal times than they were without it. What happens is exemplified in Great Britain. Eighty-six per cent of all British workers are insured partly at their own cost, partly at the cost of their employers and of the state. Because of the British Medical Association's insistence, individual practitioners are the backbone of the system. The doctor is paid so much a year for each patient who chooses him as a regular physician, with the result that his panel may comprise as many as 2500. Even if he contents himself with 1500, which is considered about right, the service rendered is often so hurried and poor that in London the district hospital is beginning to displace him. Like the Bourbons, American medicine learns nothing, and forgets nothing.

Though it has railed at the British system it will probably reconcile itself to something like it, provided that free choice is retained. And free choice is provided for in the compulsory health insurance bill framed by Senator Wagner for this country.

It may be, as the American

Medical Association has been asserting for years, that our medicine is the best in the world. But it is the best only in the large cities, where doctors huddle because there the pickings are good, life is attractive and scientific facilities are at hand. But look at the country as a whole. Workers in industry have a life expectancy approximately eight years shorter than that of office workers. Over 40 per cent of the counties in the country have no general hospitals to serve 17,000,000 people. More than two-thirds of all counties and an even larger number of towns have no full-time health officers. Two-thirds of our rural areas are without child-health clinics. Only five states have truly adequate sanatoria for the tuberculous. About 250,000 women give birth to children with no other assistance than that of surgically unclean midwives, friends and neighbors because doctors are badly distributed.

There is no way of dodging taxation if we are to care for the millions in families that must live on incomes of less than \$1,000 or even \$2,000 a year. We must also reckon with the unemployable and the medical implications of the Social Security Act. The ultimate tax bill — at least \$800,000,000 a year — can be kept down if we en-

courage and supervise group practice on the prepayment plan. We want as little bureaucratic control as possible, and that little should be limited to the publicly supported institutions to which the "medically indigent," as they are politely called, must resort. For compulsory insurance we should substitute tax-supported clinics in which groups of physicians practice free to the poor and at cost to everybody else and thus cultivate preventive medicine. There should be no distinction between the millionaire and his office boy.

Even if we adopt compulsory insurance or the system of tax-supported clinics proposed and even if we encourage group practice for those who can afford to prepay its low fees we shall not have solved our medical problem completely. We must weave into one fabric publicly supported research laboratories, medical schools, new and old group clinics and hospitals and put all under competent control to maintain the highest standards. A supreme Health Authority, composed of the leaders of medicine and selected, subject to Presidential approval, by the great medical institutions, could do the controlling. Neither the American Medical Association nor politicians can be trusted.

Under such a system the medical center would displace the county medical society as the center of a community's medical activities. Many small centers must become branches or affiliates of those in large cities, so that with quality of medical care uniform everywhere, and teaching and research more closely linked with the hospitals than they are, new knowledge will automatically saturate the whole fabric and the ten-year gap that now yawns between a discovery and its introduction will be closed at least partially. And the medical centers must be conducted not as clubs to which only a privileged few physicians have access, but as public-service institutions open to all who are qualified to practice. A doctor who is not fit to practice in a medical center or hospital is not fit to practice anywhere.

Does all this spell what is called "socialized medicine," a term that doctors love to roll under the

tongue because it suggests socialism? We "socialized" education by establishing free schools and making truancy an offense and without abolishing private schools, colleges and universities. Similarly, fine medicine could be practiced in public medical centers in competition with private physicians, hospitals and clinics. The family doctor need not go the way of the dodo. Let the well-to-do seek him out, as they do now, if he has the proper hospital connections, and let them pay him high fees for what they regard as personal service.

But the chances are that he will join a group of able colleagues, practice medicine on the Mayo principle, and make as much money as he ever did. As for the rural areas, where there are no hospitals and laboratories, they will enjoy the benefit of county medical centers where the best that science has to offer is at their command.



Blessed is the man who, having nothing to say, abstains from giving us wordy evidence of the fact.

— GEORGE ELIOT

THE RABBIT

A Story

BY MARY LAVIN

"WHY don't you stay at home, if that is the way you feel!" cried the husband at last, and he gave a furious kick to the door of the shed in which he kept the car; a kick which, although it caused the door to spring open as quickly as he could have wished, caused it to shut again as quickly from the force with which it rebounded against the corrugated side of the shed. And, as a matter of fact, his remark to his wife performed almost exactly the same feat as the door of the shed, for although it brought the blood to her face as quickly as if he had slapped her, it also brought to her tongue a retort which he had to admit was justified indeed.

"I thought it was for my sake you bought the car! I thought you got it specially to take me out in the country! I thought the doctor told you that I needed more air!"

By way of answer her husband jerked his finger in a manner indicating that she was to get into the car. "Oh, get in!" he said. "We'll have no more talk about it."

His wife looked at him doubtfully. Did he mean that he would not endure any more talk from her, or did he mean that she would not be insulted by any further talk from him? She did not know. But giving herself the benefit of the doubt she gathered up the tails of the rugs that streaked on the ground, and bundled herself into the car.

A minute later, however, when she saw him take up the shotgun from the ground where it had rested during their argument, and put it into the back of the car, she knew that it was he who intended to have no more talk from her. But it was too late then to protest any more because almost at once he had

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started the car and driven into the road.

She settled down in resignation to endure the usual gloomy drive, during which neither of them would speak, each one harboring up the bitterness of what had been said at starting. Because this was only one of a hundred quarrels, all exactly alike, which they had had since the first day he bought the car. For on the day that he had bought the car he had also bought the shot gun.

"While you're getting the air," he said, "I can get an odd shot at a rabbit."

She had been so pleased over the car that she had not paid much attention to the gun. And then, for several weeks, although he took the gun with him every evening when they drove out into the country, she had not minded much because he never shot anything with it. Once or twice she had been annoyed when the sound of a shot had startled her as she sat on the side of the ditch enjoying the peace of the fields. It was only a small annoyance, however, and she did not grudge him his fun. In fact, she had been amused sometimes to see him creeping along under cover of the heavy hawthorn bushes, or standing in the middle of a field with his hand behind his ear listening for a sound.

Then, one evening, he shot three rabbits one after another, and after that everything changed.

"How can you be so cruel!" she cried, when she saw the rabbits lying on the runningboard of the car, their fur all splattered with blood from an inexperienced shot.

"Don't talk nonsense," he said. "Rabbits are vermin."

"They have feelings!" she cried.

"If it comes to that," he said, "a shot is the most merciful death for them. They are gone in an instant. Think of all they might suffer if they lived — they might be chased to death by dogs or mangled in a trap. They might be eaten alive by weasels. A shot is merciful!"

She tried to see sense in what he said, but still, night after night, she felt her nerves becoming more and more unstrung as she got into the car, and saw him carefully putting the gun over the back of the seat. Her thoughts crowded down on her again; a bitter brood. When they first got the car he used to stop wherever she wished, or at a point from which the view was good, but now he stopped wherever he thought he would be most likely to get a shot, and it was usually the ugliest part of the country, a bushy, hedged-in place, with no view at all, and no better air than you'd get in the town.

"Why don't you walk down the road," he'd say, if she made any complaint about the view. But no matter how far she walked, no matter how lost she became in contemplating the peace and greenery of the landscape, which seemed sometimes to be as still and unchangeable as a picture under glass, there came, all of a sudden, the crashing echo of a shot. It splintered the sky. It tore the pleated green of the grasses. It cracked the plaster earth into powder. And, after the shot? Always, always, after the shot she had to run back to see if it had missed or not. And before her eyes as she ran there was the vivid, pulsing image of a bundle of furriness, somewhere in the gorse, twitching and moaning, and feeling the hard bullet in flesh that was softer than her own breast.

She had to be there when the bushes were searched, and she had to kneel down and make sure that the limbs had stiffened, and that the blue glaze of death had come over the wet brown eyes obscuring their look of terror.

The worst moment of all came, however, when they got into the car to go home, and without looking she knew that the back was filled with rabbits, all lying blurred together on the floor. No matter how she tried to distract herself to

think of other things and even to talk hysterically at the top of her voice, there came a moment when she thought that she heard a squirm or a whimper behind them.

"For God's sake stop turning round," her husband would say. "They're as dead as doornails I tell you!"

"Are you sure?" She could not restrain the irritating question.

"Am I sure! Am I sure! Of course, I'm sure."

"It was only that I thought I saw one of them twitch when you threw the box of cartridges on top of them!"

"And what if you did! They may be twitching at this minute, for that matter. Did you never hear of 'rigor mortis'? A dead body often twitches as the muscles contract. Are you so ignorant you don't know that?"

Her words would have done no good. She might as well have been silent. Yet, on the rare evenings that she managed to keep silent, biting her lips and clenching her fingers, she seemed to irritate him more.

"For God's sake stop shuddering," he would say, although it might only have been a slight shiver that ran through her involuntarily as the chill night air came in under the windscreen,

which, on the way back, was always kept open in order that he could take a pot-shot if a rabbit ran out on the road. Once or twice he had killed one that way, because the rabbits were dazzled by the headlights, and reared up ready for the shot, like clay targets at a shooting gallery.

How could he be so cruel? How could he bring himself to lift that gun and rip the bowels of those poor frightened creatures that ran so piteously true for the burrow, and so frantically waved the white flag of their small furry bottoms?

II

How could he be so cruel? How indeed? This was a question she had asked herself a hundred times in the last few days, but this evening, sitting slumped in the car, heedless of the warm evening sun that illumined the July fields, thinking over what he said to her as he opened the door of the shed, it seemed to her that his cruelty was unbearable, and furthermore, it suddenly seemed that he was no more cruel to the rabbits than he was to her, making her endure this misery, evening after evening, and pretending that he was taking her out for the sake of her health, on the advice of her doctor.

For a moment she was stunned at this new aspect which was presented to her, of a quarrel which she had begun to regard as part of the ordinary domestic routine. But immediately it seemed to her that she had hitherto been blind and unsuspecting. Perhaps she had trusted him too much. Perhaps she had taken too much for granted. Perhaps, above all, she did not know him. There could have been a cruel streak in his nature that she had never seen in the early days of their acquaintance, when he had carried her off her feet with his big talk, and to which she was blinded later by the familiarity of living face to face with him. Relevant and irrelevant thoughts flashed into her mind.

She remembered that she had only known him a month before they were married, that she had never met any of his relatives, that he did not seem to have many friends. She remembered that her parents thought it rash of her to marry in such haste in case she might make a mistake. Had she made a mistake? She was so overwhelmed at the misery of having to ask herself such a question that she felt the answer to it was unimportant.

The car, at this moment, was entering upon a part of the road

that was shaded by dense trees that grew on either side of it. She shuddered, and since she was not aware of her surroundings, she thought that the sudden chill and shadow had fallen upon her heart. Tears came into her eyes and she turned aside to hide her face. The road was shadowed for a long distance, and when they came out of the long tunnel of greenery, there were high hills to either side, and although the sky was still bright above them the fields were cold and damp. She looked around her and resented the unattractive scenery.

Why did he bring her out here? What was there to be seen in this dark cheerless place of hills and heavy trees? It was lonely. It was sinister. And then, all at once she began to feel nervous. She began to glance at him covertly as he bent over the wheel. Perhaps he was deliberately trying to drive her mad by these interminable trips, evening after evening, with his silence and his obstinacy.

She put the thought aside. Her nerves were upset from reading too many sensational novels. She looked at the fields that stretched to either side. The hills were flattening out now, and the sun, although it had sunk lower, slanted across the grass and made things brighter. But, just as her spirits

rose, on the left she saw the gutted ruins of an old building; a mill or a barracks, and at the sight of it her nerves were set jangling again.

In a few minutes, however, they had left the mill behind, and come into a flat stretch of country, the roads white with dust, the fields bright with clumps of gorse on which the sun shone down with its last burst of glory. The car came to a stop with a jerk.

"You go down the road," said her husband, "I'm sure to get a shot here," and he grabbed the gun from the back of the car and sprang into the road, his blue eyes and his sandy hair, and in particular his rosy cheeks, all showing that with masculine superficiality he was once more affable and ready to treat her amicably.

She stared at him. It seemed as hard now to think evil of him as it had been to think good of him a few minutes earlier. As he stood on the road, examining the barrel of the gun, she continued to stare at him. She followed every detail of his person as intently as if he were a stranger. She felt a renewal of the interest in him that had recently been blurred by intimacy. He walked down the road. She stared after him, unwilling to let him out of her sight, and when he went around a bend in the road, she

sprang out of the car and began to walk after him with rapid urgent steps. For some reason she felt a determination not to let him out of her sight.

There he was! She had come in sight of him again. Drawing herself lightly together, and stepping forward cautiously on the balls of her feet, she began to stalk him as slowly and carefully as he stalked the furry creatures in the gorse. Now he stood still. Now he took a few paces, and now he stood still again in the middle of the dusty road, and, for a few moments, although he was not moving, the dust crawled silently and whitely around his feet. It went slowly over his boots and in through his laces and lacing eyelets. Dust, too, lay heavily on the blades of the long ditch grasses. It softened the pointed barbs of the briar. The man moved again. The dust trembled into new shapes around his feet. He crept along making no noise. The silence pressed down tightly on both of them. He stopped again. This time a leaf in the bushes had stirred. He listened. She stood too, and listened. The leaf stirred again. He raised his gun. She rushed her hands to her breasts to brace herself against the shock of the gunfire. But just before the gun went off a bird flew up in a spiral of

melody. The man lowered his gun impatiently and muttered something. The bird flew down into another clump of bushes.

After a minute or two the man bent his left leg and cautiously put forth his right leg in a long silent stride. Then he bent his right leg and took a long stride with his left leg. He was intent and purposeful. Really and truly, looking at him now it was hard to think him anything worse than a child, playing some pointless game, alone by himself. He looked as if he was playing at being a wooden soldier; a wooden soldier doing the goose-step. If only he had a red uniform! If only he had a bayonet stuck in his belt! It gave her pleasure to sneer at him. Really, one could hardly keep one's face he was so absurd. Hysterically she gave a short laugh, and the sound was louder than she thought it would be. Instantly, somewhere quite near, a blade of grass bent slowly down to the earth and then sprang back into the air again. What was that? She stilled every possible pulse in her body but her heart beat wildly. She stared at the tuft of grass and there, like two leaves of last year's beech were the thin pointed ears of a rabbit. She was never so near one before. Two garnet eyes! She could see the soft marking along its back. It sat

humped up like a young cat. For a moment she looked at the rabbit, all pleasure at the sight of it; so pretty; so near to her. Then she saw its nose twitch, and with a gulp she thought of the gun. She looked around her fearfully. The man was several yards further down the road, but not far enough away to make a shot impossible.

III

She was suddenly filled with energy. He wouldn't shoot it! He wouldn't! Tense in every nerve she resolved to save this rabbit, this one at least, from his cruelty. Yet it wasn't as simple as it seemed to prevent him. If she made any sound — moved, coughed, spoke — he would swing around at once to abuse her and he would see the rabbit. She must not attract his attention. Slowly, indifferently, as if to tie a shoe lace, she stooped and picked up a stone from the dusty road, keeping her eye all the time upon the man with the gun. He did not hear a sound. He didn't look back. After a minute she rose up again slowly and silently. The man still stared at the far fields. From low under her waist level she jerked her wrist upward suddenly, but with a strangely sly and unobtrusive gesture, and the stone flew

upward in a silent arc over the hedge and down into the wet green grass with no louder sound than a splash of water. But it was loud enough for the rabbit, and he sprang into the air and darted for the burrow, alternately thudding the meadow and rising in arcs through the air with a flash of white.

And then a curious thing happened. As she saw him go, the blood began to race in her veins, and a pulse beat madly in her temple.

A frantic fanfare of excitement started up in her ears. The brassy sun blared in her eyes.

"Oh," she screamed. "Oh," and calling out and beckoning to her husband she ran to the ditch. "Here!" she screamed. "Here!" And as the man ran towards her, startled, she scrambled up on the ditch, but, almost at once she jumped down again and scuffled the road for more stones. Down from over her head in straight and hard diagonals came missiles of pebbles and dry clay clots.

"Here! Here!" she kept screaming hysterically.

"Where? Where?" came the excited reply.

She could not see, nor think. The world began to spin around her crazily. Then suddenly into the

dust and noise and terror came a calm and reasonable shot, a logical, masterful volume of sound that filled her with a stern and satisfying sense of power.

"Did you get him, do you think?"

Did you get him?" she called out, as they tore their way through the brambles together, brushing aside the dusty sprays and making a passage with scratched and tingling fingers.



AN OLD FAMILY PICTURE

BY CHARLES ANGOFF

TIME can be merciful,
Erasing greed and malice
And garnishing all evil
With the tears of God.

Time can be cruel, too;
Bringing to the fore
All the vileness hidden
By youth and another day;

Time can work miracles
For the angels to marvel at,
Turning charity to love
And hate to deepest pity.

Time can do all things,
Except turn back.
Oblivion ever mocks
Its proud eternity.

FINLAND'S SITDOWN ARMY

BY ALBIN E. JOHNSON

DEPLOYED along a 600-mile front stretching from the Gulf of Finland to Lake Onega and up above the Arctic Circle, twiddling its thumbs and wondering when the boredom will be over, is this war's most eccentric phenomenon: Finland's sitdown army. In a deep wilderness of forest lake, some 200,000 men at war with Russia have neither fought a battle nor moved a yard for nearly two years. Their order to halt and dig in on a defensive line came two days before Pearl Harbor. They have remained at that line ever since — playing games, repairing local war ravages, studying, singing, but not fighting.

Their presence has thus far spared the country from a Russian invasion. Also, it is credited with having kept the German and Russian armies apart in that region, thereby preventing the Karelian

country from becoming once more a battleground. Whatever its original purpose, Finland's army is now conspicuously "on the spot," caught between a superior enemy whom it does not wish to fight and a weakening ally whom it does not care to aid. The government in Helsinki realizes clearly enough, as Hitler takes defeat after defeat, that the day of reckoning with Moscow draws nearer. Yet Finland finds it nearly impossible to loosen itself from its doomed associate.

The writer has just spent some time with this unemployed army on its calm and leisurely fighting fronts. He found virtually no military activity. The Russians, busy with the Nazis elsewhere, have left the stalemated Finnish lines to be cracked at a more convenient time. Marshal Mannerheim's sitdown troops shovel snow and chop much-needed wood for the folks back

ALBIN E. JOHNSON is an American foreign correspondent of twenty-four years' standing — United Press, New York World, Philadelphia Public Ledger, freelance. He returned home recently from Finland, where he visited the Karelian and Ladoga fronts, living with the Finnish forces, but by the time this article is in print he will again be "somewhere in Scandinavia."

home. They rebuild war-torn villages and put farms back in cultivation throughout the re-occupied Karelian Isthmus area. Otherwise, when not exchanging meaningless potshots with careless Russians who do not keep their heads down, the Finnish soldiers go to school in comfortable, electrically-lighted dugouts within 800 yards of the enemy's trenches.

The paradoxical status of the Finnish army was strikingly illustrated during the long siege of Leningrad. Although their front line trenches were within sight of Leningrad's suburbs, Mannerheim's men refused to collaborate with the German armies. For more than twenty months, they did not advance a single foot. Instead, they put in their time constructing elaborate quarters unequalled by those of any European army. On Karelian hillsides I saw bunkhouses and battalion and regimental headquarters with fireplaces, glass windows, comfortable beds and electric lights. The barracks of the enlisted men are superior to many so-called permanent camps for American recruits. Within a few hundred yards of the Russian trenches I found an excellent, well arranged *sauna* or Finnish bath-house. Nearby was a Lotta Svard canteen operated by three charming young women.

It would have been an easy matter for the Russians to blow the entire place to bits with a few well-directed shells. Perhaps there is a tacit understanding to live and let live, at least for the time being. A few hundred yards down the line the Finnish trenches were edged to within eighty yards of the Russian foxholes, and loudspeakers carried on daily conversations between the combatants. "It's all very pleasant," said one officer, "and not very dangerous if you keep your head down. We tell them when the Germans are winning; they tell us when the Germans are losing, so we get all the news from both sides."

Sitdown army is the Finn's own bantering name for it. With wine and women strictly taboo in the war zone, which stretches back more than a hundred miles from the front lines, the soldier finds consolation in the last of the famous triumvirate — song. Every group, from squad to regiment, holds regular song-fests, often within earshot of the enemy. Everywhere there seem to be accordion players and at least a violin or two and a flute. At worst, a few harmonicas serve to spark the dugout serenades. One regiment, squatting within sight of Leningrad's church spires, and within easy hearing distance of Kronstad's throbbing big

guns, has over 200 radios distributed among its 2,000 officers and ranks. The men are free to tune in on all programs, including short-wave propaganda broadcasts from Moscow, Berlin or London. Usually, I discovered, they prefer the symphony and musical programs, wherever these may originate.

II

To fill the dreary stretches of time between Russian attacks and patrol activities, the men on the Ladoga-Onega sector formed the Aaniskinna Academic Club. The purpose was to arrange lectures and study courses for studiously inclined soldiers. Men recruited from the university wished to continue their studies, despite occasional interruption by enemy shelling. News of the club spread along the front, far up to the Arctic Circle, and before long a Society for Advancement of Public Study came into the picture. At last reports this front-line university had more than 25,700 students, and requests for study courses in architecture, agricultural chemistry and similar subjects were coming in at the rate of 3300 monthly. The Field Post mail by this time consists largely of textbooks and examination papers. "It is amazing," a General

Staff instructor told me, "how the boys can concentrate under front-line conditions. Their papers are as good, if not better, than those prepared by students back in the university."

The greatest grief experienced by the Finnish army comes from the Russian Suicide Squads dropped from airplanes during the night behind the Finnish lines. These "commandos" are usually disguised in Finnish uniforms. They speak Finnish fluently and have instructions to dynamite bridges, ammunition and supply dumps, and to kill officers. They have been known to trek along with the Finnish army for weeks before being discovered, usually after attempting to take the life of a commissioned officer. Almost always they are Karelians who were formerly Finnish subjects. Needless to say, the Finnish soldier is not nearly so eager to rescue the "unhappy Karelian" as he used to be.

For the rest, fighting is mostly limited to sporadic jousts between opposing snipers. Many soldiers are inquisitive, and some are just plain reckless. Russian snipers and sharpshooters bag an average of seven Finns per day, and the Finns claim at least man for man. As casualty totals on an extensive front the figures are not exactly impressive.

The Finns frankly admit the futility of the whole situation. Neither leaders nor men in the ranks have hidden their anxiety to get out of the war. They have never been happy over their association with a dictatorship which they fear and despise only a wee bit less than they fear and despise the Soviet régime. They joined on the Axis side in June, 1941, in the hope of recouping losses sustained in the winter war of 1939-40 with Russia. In the words of their late President Kallio, they were willing to "accept help even from the devil himself" against the Russian aggressors.

But that marriage of convenience has long ago outlived its attractiveness. The Finns know — and say — that the Germans are going to lose. They do not blink the

fact that they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by continuing in a hopeless war against a nation nearly sixty times their superior in size, population and basic resources. This realization is behind their frantic efforts in recent months to negotiate a peace with Russia. They may reach an accord by the time this appears in print. On the other hand, the forward-driving Russians have no need to hurry, and they may decide to dispose of the Finnish matter whenever it suits their own purposes best.

Meanwhile, the strangest army in the world literally sings for its supper, awaiting the day when it can go home and get to work on the reconstruction Finland so badly needs.



As Our Boys Fight and Die —

BY PERICLES (495-429 B.C.)

For you now it remains to rival what they have done and, knowing the secret of happiness to be freedom and the secret of freedom a brave heart, not idly to stand aside from the enemy's onset.

How a home-front army

LAST YEAR, twice as many Americans lost their lives in accidents within their own homes as were reported killed in battle in the first 18 months of this war!

In the same year, *well over three quarters of a million* workers were temporarily disabled by accidents in their homes.

The working time lost by this huge Home-Front army was enough to operate more than 50 war plants, each employing 1000 people, for an entire year.

Most home accidents need not happen. Carelessness is the chief reason why friendly, familiar surroundings are so often the scenes of accidents which cause pain, grief, and financial loss.

Today, especially, it is your responsibility and that of your family to help reduce the number of home accidents.



The practice of the three basic safety principles outlined on these pages would eliminate most of them.

Remove danger points. Keep stairs, including railings, in repair and well-lighted... *a greater number of serious accidents occur on stairs than in any room.*

It is sometimes wise to put guards on windows so children won't fall.

Have electrical equipment, irons, heaters, toasters, etc., inspected and repaired. Replace frayed cords and loose plugs. Watch out for leaks in gas appli-



ances and pipes. Clean chimney flues and heating equipment regularly.

Practice good housekeeping. Stairs and landings should be kept free of brooms, toys, boxes, and other objects which might cause falls. Scatter rugs should be securely anchored. Don't use wax too liberally on floors and take care that it is rubbed in thoroughly.

Tie back kitchen curtains so they won't catch fire. Knives and sharp in-

suffers heavy casualties

struments should be kept in a safe place when not in use... handles of pots and pans on the stove should be turned in to avoid tipping.

Keep furniture and other objects out of the way so you won't trip or stumble over them.

Develop careful habits. Use a stepladder, or a straight, strong chair—not the



nearest rocker or box—when reaching to high places.

Careful householders will disconnect electric appliances like irons and curlers before leaving the room. They will never leave a hearth fire, whether gas, wood, or coal, unguarded.

Close cupboard doors and bureau drawers promptly to avoid collision. Get rid of broken glass or other sharp refuse as quickly as possible.

Hands should be dry when touching any electrical switch or apparatus.



Make a tour of your home this very day.

Check for yourself, and urge your family, especially the children, to see that these three basic safety principles are consistently carried out. Don't give an accident a chance to happen!

On request, Metropolitan will send you a free folder, "Home Defense Against Accidents."

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► *George Seldes' In Fact*
provides case study in

THE CAMOUFLAGED COMMUNIST PRESS

BY FREDERICK WOLTMAN

FOR the benefit of such innocent Americans as may question the existence or the extent of the spider-web of communist publications in the USA, the testimony of an unimpeachable witness is at hand — none other than Ruth McKenney, best known for her humorous *My Sister Eileen*. Miss McKenney, an ardent communist, has no humor about politics. At intervals she writes a kind of Rhapsody in Red for that veteran communist weekly, the *New Masses*; and on May 31, 1938, she had this to say:

The Communist Party of America operates on almost every conceivable battle-front of this country, in trade unions, in farm organizations, in ladies' clubs, in Harlem, in the deep South, among the intellectuals. All this busy and effective scurrying around is efficiently centralized. . . . The Communist Party . . . publishes and distributes more pamphlets than any other organization in the United States. . . . Besides the three English dailies and the *Morning Freiheit*, not to mention a score or more Finnish and Chinese, Hungarian and Lithuanian, Ital-

ian, Polish, Latvian and other foreign-language publications, the party has a hand in the publication of assorted other magazines of various types and kinds. Some of the magazines the party itself publishes. . . . Many others the party helps edit. *And many, many other magazines are edited by people friendly to the party who come around and ask for advice and direction in getting out their weekly and monthly publications.*

Miss McKenney is too modest; her list is abbreviated. The uninitiated reader, moreover, will not realize how far-reaching and effective are the "many, many other magazines" under "friendly" control to which she alludes.

A clinical dissection of the American communist press as a whole is a Herculean task which some great American educational foundation should undertake in defense of democracy and common decency. Here we can deal only with the camouflaged division, through a case study of one of its most successful examples.

For some years it has been one

FREDERICK WOLTMAN, on the staff of the New York World-Telegram for the past fourteen years, has in recent years reported extensively the activities of communists and their fellow-travelers.

of the writer's professional chores to follow the communist party-line publications. The pursuit is not without its fascination. It is wondrous to behold the way in which this press, whether frankly communist or posing as independent, swings in perfect unison from one "opinion" to another, from one "campaign" to another. It is goose-stepping journalism without equal outside the totalitarian countries.

Each time Russia's foreign policy is switched, its open and masked house organs in America execute sudden political somersaults. The Roosevelt administration consists of "warmongers" one day and true patriots the next. The general press is accused of "pro-war hysteria" one day, and abused for isolationism the next. Leading America Firsters, treated respectfully as peace advocates, overnight become "fascists" in the same pages. John L. Lewis ranks as a hero of labor as long as he plays with the communists in the CIO but becomes the personification of all evil when he breaks with them on the war issue. Contempt for "bourgeois democracy" turns suddenly into torrid declarations of love for the same American democracy.

Everybody recognizes these gyrations when they are made by the official communist organs. They

have even become the butts of editorial humorists. This is one of the handicaps which the camouflaged periodicals are designed to overcome. As "objective" purveyors of expert opinion they can be far more influential than the papers and journals displaying the Soviet label. Their editors vigorously deny being communist and point to their mastheads flying the righteous banner of independence. Only a careful study of their sudden changes of opinion, and the correspondence of these with the sinuous wriggles of the line laid down in the open party press, reveals the truth.

These false-front journals come and go, because as soon as their deceiving maneuver is seen through by enough people, they lose their value. One of the recent casualties was *U.S. Week*, published in Milwaukee, which succeeded in fooling many people for two critical years, the years of the Stalin-Hitler friendship pact. Another and more ambitious venture which folded in 1942 was *Friday* (later *Scoop*), an illustrated weekly. The comrades have a camouflaged "scientific" organ, *Science and Society*, to which many scholars contribute learned articles, blissfully unaware that their names are being used to help sell party-line Marxism to the American people. Even the domain of

religion is not exempt. *The Protestant*, presenting itself as a pious exponent of liberalism in religion, follows the party line unswervingly. Recently its religious zeal took the strange form of a defense of the Soviet executions of the Polish-Jewish socialists, Ehrlich and Alter.

However, the newsletter *In Fact*, founded and edited by one George Seldes, at present provides the outstanding example of ingenious and agile toeing of the mark in conformity with the party line. It can therefore serve properly as a case study of the whole phenomenon.

Launched on May 20, 1940, in the heyday of the Stalin-Hitler honeymoon, *In Fact* was heralded with a trumpet call worthy of any Goebbels mouthpiece on this side of the Atlantic. "One of our great dangers now is being dragged into the present European war," George Seldes proclaimed in his prospectus. "America wants peace. We must therefore beware of both politicians and newspapers, and expose war-mongers." Venturing forth in the darkest hour of modern history, when France lay clawed by the Nazi hordes, Seldes dedicated *In Fact* to a crusade to keep America out of the "imperialist war."

As Elmer Davis has pointed out, a primary test of a communist is his attitude toward the war preceding

and following Hitler's attack on Russia on June 22, 1941. *In Fact* passes this test completely. From the time of its launching until mid-June of 1941, the paper denounced the war on Germany, howled for "peace," railed against "British propaganda," denounced conscription and convoys, and defended the communist-inspired strikes in war plants. It denounced particularly the American newspapers for taking sides against Hitler, accusing some of them of accepting bribes from allied sources.

On all these issues, *In Fact* executed an about-face after Hitler broke the Berlin-Moscow compact; since then it has been equally vehement on the diametrically opposite side.

Today *In Fact* has more than 100,000 readers — not a mean feat for a small, poorly written and poorly printed four-page leaflet after three and a half years of existence. It is read not only by those who like to be referred to as intellectuals, liberals and progressives but by many well-heeled conservatives. Many thousands of other Americans get slants and alleged facts indirectly, by word of mouth, through *In Fact* readers. All these people apparently think they are getting fresh ideas and inside information not to be had elsewhere.

Most of them would be astonished, even horrified, to learn that they are getting substantially the same ideas and the same "facts" available at any given period in the *Daily Worker* and the *New Masses*, frequently couched in the same familiar party-line phrases.

II

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between deliberate policy and muddle-headedness. But there is nothing muddle-headed about *In Fact* or its editor. George Seldes has been too close to the communist movement — first as a bitter enemy, then as an enthusiastic friend — not to know how the wheels turn.

A sensational journalist of the Chicago *Tribune* school, he had gotten himself expelled from a number of countries, including Russia and Italy. In several books, numberless articles and speeches during nearly fifteen years he attacked Russia and communism unsparingly as in a class with Italy and fascism. But about 1936, suddenly and without any public retractions or explanations, he adopted the fellow-traveler viewpoint. From that year to 1941, his name appeared more than fifty-five times as a signer of petitions,

sponsor, endorser or contributor in connection with communist enterprises. He showed up on nearly all communist "fronts" and in nearly all communist publications.

In April 1940, he was chairman of the Citizens Defense Committee which the communists created to go to bat for pickets arrested in front of the French Consulate in New York at the moment France was fighting for its life against Hitler. On January 3, 1940, he signed a declaration warning the Latin American people to be "on guard" against "a new menace" of American imperialism. The following August 27 he endorsed the American Peace Mobilization, the communist isolationist organization, because "there is no evidence of an emergency, there is no necessity whatever for the Burke peacetime conscription which is one of the symptoms of fascism." As a matter of course, his name was prominent in every party-line document whitewashing the Moscow blood purges.

The character of *In Fact* must therefore be judged not in the abstract but in the light of its editor's long labors for communist causes, and long association with communist periodicals and organizations. A party stalwart and editor of the *New Masses*, Bruce Minton

(husband of the aforementioned Ruth McKenney), serves with Seldes as associate editor of *In Fact*.

One of the inside stories that has not appeared in *In Fact* deserves mention, as a commentary on its editor. In 1931, Seldes was gathering material in Europe for a book on Mussolini, *Sawdust Caesar*. He met Dr. Angelica Balabanoff, a well-known socialist writer who had befriended the future dictator when he was young, sick, and destitute. Seldes offered to sell several articles for her to American magazines. Years passed, but he neither placed nor returned those articles. But when *Sawdust Caesar* appeared, lo and behold, two of these articles were included without permission and without payment, but with a footnote saying, falsely, that she had written them for this book!

Dr. Balabanoff, by that time an exile in America, is a long-suffering soul and swallowed this outrage without public protest. Meanwhile Seldes got a job on the staff of *Ken* (an illustrated weekly, now defunct) and there another of the Balabanoff articles soon appeared, under her by-line. As Seldes well knew, Dr. Balabanoff is intensely anti-Stalin, yet he not only published the article without permission but *altered it thoroughly to give it a strong pro-Stalin tone in line with*

his own new views. This was too much for the lady's patience. She entered suit and Seldes, after some squirming, wrote a letter under date of May 3, 1939, in which he confessed all:

I did change the wording, arrangement of episodes, and paragraphs and I am sorry that in so doing I misinterpreted your approach to the different problems, events and personalities mentioned in that articles. . . . Unfortunately I did not call you up and consult with you before submitting this edited manuscript to *Ken*.

In short, he had done a job for the cause.¹ Most newspapermen, after signing such a confession of distorting facts and inventing opinions, would disappear from public life. Seldes brazened it out. More than that, he set himself up through *In Fact* as a crusader against the "corrupt press" and a dispenser of unbiased inside news.

III

In his prospectus Seldes pledged himself to wage war on the "bias, distortion, coloration in news lead headlines — the unfair handling of news that makes unfair public opinion." He emphasized that his paper "intends to give news, not 'dope.'" From the start, however, it was a

¹ For details of the Balabanoff suit against Seldes see the *Socialist Review*, May-June, 1939.

dope-sheet in the crudest sense of the word. In the very first issue, on page one column one, there appeared a yarn about "eighteen prominent figures" plotting to get America into the war. No source whatever was given and no proof. It was straight and shabby "dope." Every subsequent issue brimmed over with similar synthetic "news." Here are typical items:

By the middle of August the present European war will be ended. Thus the State Department appraised the present outlook in Europe, according to *In Fact's* reliable informants. . . . (July 15, 1940)

In Fact also learns that conscription is designed to offset the indecisive Havana conference. Concessions were made there to the U. S., but in the form of promises that still must be implemented. If these promises are to be enforced and new concessions extracted, the U. S. must be prepared to intervene with arms. Hence conscription. Hence the fight to legalize sending the National Guard outside American boundaries. (August 26, 1940)

Again the proposal is made to provoke Mexico so that an expeditionary force can be sent, a dress rehearsal for a big war, just as was done in 1914. The oil companies are anxious for this war. (August 26, 1940)

Wendell Willkie, returning from England, reassured his banker and big business friends that there is no danger that the British Empire will become a socialized state. . . . It is therefore O.K. for America to save the British Empire. (December 2, 1940)

Not only was this sort of propaganda palmed off as news, but it followed a definite anti-British, anti-intervention line from the same point of view as the open communist press at the time. One must search diligently in the lowest depths of journalism for "news" like this, in the May 12, 1941 number:

Here are some of the most important facts which will be documented in this and succeeding issues of *In Fact*:

- 1) That in preparation for entering the war the majority of American citizens who want peace are being intimidated and harassed by J. Edgar Hoover, who did the same job for Att'y Gen'l Palmer in World War I;
- 2) That the FBI has sought to frame progressive unionists;
- 3) That the FBI has cooperated with labor's worst enemies in an effort so far singularly unsuccessful, to break strikes;
- 4) That a witch hunt against civil liberties is being instituted, without any official war-time legislation, by Hoover and the FBI.

Mr. Seldes offered no "facts" to support these wild charges (then being made in every communist paper) either in this or "succeeding issues" of his leaflet. In a little over a month he wasn't very much interested in "the majority of American citizens who want peace," because by that time Russia, too, had been invaded. But in the first thirteen months of its life *In Fact* harped on the dirty work of the "warmongers" in almost every is-

sue. On July 1, 1940, it denounced the President's "campaign to abridge democracy at home, his wish to force dollar imperialism down the throats of hemisphere nations," and added:

In the midst of the war hysteria which employs the term "Fifth Column" to smash the Wagner Act and social gains by labor, Senators Rush D. Holt, Burton K. Wheeler, Ernest Lundeen and Gerald P. Nye, isolationists, have named as the British Fifth Column in America: Thomas W. Lamont, Lord Lothian, Henry L. Stimson, Lewis Douglas, Conant of Harvard and William Allen White.

In Fact not only approved but added to this smear of "the British Fifth Column." Seldes plugged the book *Lothian vs. Lothian*, put out by Flanders Hall, which subsequently was disclosed in federal prosecutions to be a Nazi publishing house. Anyone who warned America on the need to prepare and to act was as a matter of course subjected to *In Fact's* angry epithets. Thus on July 15, 1940 it wrote: "Every newspaper man in Washington knows that the closest thing to a native American fascist is Wendell Willkie."

On August 12, 1940, the Seldes dopesheet wailed, "War hysteria is sweeping the land. The press is 87 per cent for peace-time conscription. . . . Minorities, especially foreigners are terror-

stricken." Two weeks later it came out full blast against the draft, under the caption "PUBLIC BETRAYED ON CONSCRIPTION." The press, he stormed, was lying. Seldes then proceeded to print the "news" about the draft which none of the warmongering papers dared to touch. *In Fact* was "informed" — no sources given, as usual — that "the draft has a twofold purpose":

1. It encourages the British to continue the fight against Germany.
2. It makes possible U. S. seizure of the disintegrating British Empire, if Germany defeats England.

The United States now considers itself the heir to the British Empire. The great commercial powers, Big Business, have no desire to see Germany grab what they now consider their inheritance. If Britain keeps up the fight, both sides will soon be exhausted. Then a prepared (i.e., conscripted, disciplined, regimented, fascicized) America will step in at the right moment and win the war for itself at the expense of both England and Germany.

Like the open communist organs, *In Fact* came loudly to the support of the communist-controlled isolationist American Peace Mobilization. "The APM is a growing movement which has not been panicked into support of wage-cuts, strike-breaking and abandonment of the Bill of Rights under the guise of a war for freedom and democracy," it reported. The

"strike-breaking" in question, a theme that came up in many issues, referred to the government's measures against communist-fomented stoppages in airplane factories and other war industries.

On June 9, 1941, only two weeks before the "imperialist war" was turned for Seldes into a holy anti-fascist war by the invasion of Russia, he wrote a two-page editorial entitled "*In Fact* Restates Its Aims as America Enters the War." It makes amazing reading in view of *In Fact's* later zeal for the war. Here are excerpts:

The great event in our time is America's entry into the Second World War, or "the bloodshed phase of the present conflict," when millions of young men will risk their arms, their eyes and their lives again to make the world safe for democracy. Before it is too late, before the present "voluntary" censorship intimidates everyone and fear prevents all from speaking out, I want to restate the purposes of this newsweekly. . . .

Many months ago *In Fact* produced the factual evidence of how the President, his cabinet, most of the press, powerful men and forces were conditioning the mind of America — public opinion — to accept war, and eventually to raise hysterical enthusiasm for it. . . .

Chicago's *Tribune*, New York's *News* are anti-war; they are critical of British policy; they have mentioned India, but no newspaper has told the real story. . . . The truth simply is this: Britain is not a democracy.

In the same issue Seldes gave a favorable play to a speech by Rep-

resentative Marcantonio, the only Congressman to vote against national defense, in which he had said: "This is not a war for democracy. It is a war of Hitlerism vs. Hitlerism." Soon enough Seldes, Marcantonio, all the candid and camouflaged party-liners, changed their tune. They did not need Pearl Harbor to convince them that the "warmongers" were patriots after all. Untouched by the menace of Hitlerism to ourselves, they were aroused by its menace to Russia.

IV

Until June 22, 1940, Seldes had defended the Nazi-Soviet pact, with the arguments familiar to readers of the *New Masses*. When Germany smashed that pact, *In Fact* abruptly ceased its diatribes against the draft, the "warmongers" and the "fascist" ways of the President. It ceased to bewail the use of convoys. Instead it became solicitous about the proper training of the conscripted army, and soon it was lambasting lack of zeal in behalf of the Allies.

By the fall of 1941 (before Pearl Harbor), Seldes' line was indistinguishable from the new pro-war line of the *Daily Worker*. He was now going full blast against Knudsen, Stettinius and others not for

urging preparedness, but for "sabotaging American defense." Forgetful of his so-recent hatred for the British, Seldes now attacked Joseph P. Kennedy because, allegedly, "he has joined forces with business men identified with the America First and No-Foreign War Committees, who believe that the interests of US business will be best served by a collapse of the British Empire." Previously, in his isolationist phase, Seldes has castigated Kennedy for warmongering.

With time Seldes' memory of *In Fact's* own past faded so completely that he was attacking the New York *Daily News* for the very things he had found so praiseworthy earlier. He was warning his readers against "appeasement-minded 'defensive war' spokesmen," among whom he listed the *Daily News*, the Scripps-Howard press, and unnamed persons "down in Wall Street." Shamelessly overlooking his previous laments about Wall Street dragging us into war, he now complained:

Wall Street looks at the war from one angle only: win, lose or draw, will it be good for profits? The question of defeating the Axis, of saving the world, including the US, from fascism does not even rate discussion.

To follow *In Fact* beyond this point becomes fruitless. Its contents became politically merged

with those of the official communist press. While furious at anyone who questions American policy in this critical period, it has been unrestrained in its demand for a "second front" as defined by Moscow. When Willkie returned from Russia and spoke up for a second front, *In Fact* applauded, ignoring the fact that it had called him a fascist. When the communist press began to smear the Yugoslav leader, General Mihailovich, Seldes sprang into action with charges that Mihailovich is

the agent of the Yugoslav gov't-in-exile, London, which aims to re-establish the Karageorgevitch dynasty, the monarchy which has been the agency of the reactionaries, the landowners, anti-democrats, and native fascists. . . . Today it is admitted by even pro-Mihailovichers that Chetnik leaders have sold out to Hitler. (January 11, 1943)

Small wonder that the *Daily Worker* praises Seldes and his dopesheet. It merely returns the compliment. In a signed article in the *New Masses* just before he launched his own paper, Seldes attested that "it now becomes imperative to read the *Daily Worker*" for "the actual information" about Europe.

What needs to be especially noted for the record is how the open and camouflaged press work together in their campaigns of vituperation. Take, for example, the campaign against the *Reader's Digest*. Because

that monthly had not hesitated to expose communist methods in America, it was designated by the Communist Party as a "public enemy" and the whole force of the party's press, overt and "independent," was dedicated to "proving" that the *Digest* and its editors are fascists.

In remarkable coordination, *In Fact*, the *Sunday Worker* and the *New Masses* repeated the same lies in almost identical language. These lies were then gathered together in a pamphlet published by the party. Innocent readers of *In Fact* might wonder at the effrontery of the smear, but they could not know that it was a straight Communist Party campaign. THE AMERICAN MERCURY and the Book-of-the-Month Club have come in for a share of the mud directed at the *Digest*, since they had published or distributed materials distasteful to the Communist Party that also were used in part by the *Digest*.

One of the main communist counts against THE AMERICAN MERCURY, curiously, is that it was the first to publish the airpower views of Major Alexander P. de Seversky. Since Seversky, like all airpower advocates, advised against premature invasion of Europe, he was re-

garded as an enemy of the "second front." By *In Fact* and *Daily Worker* logic, THE MERCURY which published Seversky's articles, the Book-of-the-Month Club which distributed Seversky's book, and the *Reader's Digest* which published excerpts from it were obviously linked in a "fascist plot" to help Hitler by preventing a "second front."

We have examined the Seldes dopesheet in detail because it provides such a perfect object lesson in camouflaged communist assaults on public opinion. Only those familiar with communist methods and acquainted with the latest twists of the party line recognize the thick propaganda and the organized smears in the disguised press for what they are. Others are taken in, especially by the pretense of inside revelations. In most instances the equivalent revelations are on display in the official Communist Party organs.

No one of the camouflaged publications, alone, may amount to much. But taken together they represent a large and influential anti-democratic force, the more dangerous because its hooks are baited with fine words about democracy, justice and the plain people.



► *Main Street horns in
on a Broadway legend.*

WHO IS GEORGE SPELVIN?

BY GILBERT SWAN

FOR nearly forty years the original, one-and-only George Spelvin was Broadway's Paul Bunyan and its sole contribution to American folklore. He was linked exclusively with the theatre world. But about two years ago, quite suddenly, confusion set in. Columnist Westbrook Pegler, weary of John Q. Public and Joe Doakes, began scratching about for a new label with which to identify the Average American — and hit upon George Spelvin.

Now Spelvin, like all legendary figures, had grown accustomed to the impossible, but this was the first time he had been asked to face such a conflict of identities. In a sense it was the first time he had been forced to dabble in real life, after a colorful career behind the footlights. As George Spelvin, Average American, he was asked to assume responsibility for highly controversial opinions, whereas the original Spelvin had no opinions but only lines, if that much.

To theatre folk this transformation seemed a fantastic bit of mis-

casting. To make matters worse, it soon became clear that the traditional Spelvin of the show-shops was being displaced by the impostor. Main Street was blotting out Broadway. Who knows whether the theatrical legend will survive the blow? Just in case he doesn't, here's his biography for the record:

Anyone associated with the show-shops during the past generation has taken for granted at least two traditions: 1) That an actor who had a mere "walk-on" rôle was likely to be listed on the program as George Spelvin. 2) That any actor who played more than one rôle in one show made his second appearance disguised as George Spelvin on the play bills. In the profession this is known as "doubling" and the word Spelvin is an accepted synonym for the duplication. But the circumstances of Spelvin's origin and his general background have remained unknown to the public for the very good reason that they are also un-

familiar to most actors. To begin with:

George Spelvin was a name invented on the spur of the moment for the laudable purpose of saving a play-script from the wastebasket. The inventor was the late Edward Abeles, an English comedian who had often delighted friends by "giving birth to other fictional characters." Abeles would wait until an argument grew warm; then he would invent a bogus authority on the subject and summarily end the discussion. His "great Professor Trapp" was quoted in every Green Room. But Spelvin was his masterpiece.

Spelvin was born in the Lambs Club, and this distinction was properly commemorated by an artist's conception of *Spelvin in His Heyday* which long decorated the Club walls. It happened some thirty-eight years ago on a cold and blustery afternoon in early winter. In a conference room, filled with smoke and voices, a half-dozen men were sitting in final judgment on the fate of a play. Quite willing to swallow his previous investments but unwilling to toss away any more money was Frederick Thompson, of Hippodrome and Luna Park fame. Mr. Thompson, highly successful as a spectacle producer, had taken his first chance at drama

production by tying up the stage rights of *Brewster's Millions*, best-selling novel of the period. His enthusiasm cooled when such popular dramatists as George Broadhurst, Augustus Thomas and William Gillette advised him to drop the idea. They agreed that "you can't dramatize it."

But there was a young man who, in the process of doing odd chores around the Hippodrome, had overheard some of the conversations. He was Winchell Smith, come to town from Connecticut to be a great actor. After four years, his sole reward had been a small part in Gillette's *Via Wireless*. So he became a stage manager's helper and read the plays of Bernard Shaw, who had not yet been accepted by America. Convinced that he, too, could write plays, young Smith boldly approached his boss with a blunt announcement: "I think Brewster would make a swell play!"

"Well, for Gaw-w-wd's sake, go ahead and write it," blurted Thompson.

A few weeks later the great showman had put his "OK" on a script which represented the combined efforts of Smith and Byron Ongley, a playwright upon whom Smith had called for help. A high-priced cast was ordered into re-

hearsal and Eddie Abeles got the rôle of Brewster. It became evident, after a few minutes, that the script was terrible. Nor did weeks of revision and rehearsal seem to improve matters. Thompson gave notice that he was through. Abeles, who liked his rôle, believed it could be rescued and pleaded with Thompson to call a "play conference" at which expert outside opinion would be consulted.

Hence the gathering in the Lambs Club and after an hour the scales seemed hopelessly balanced against *Brewster*. Suddenly it occurred to Abeles that he might try, as a last resort, his "bogus authority" act. With an impatient sigh and a remorseful shake of the head, Abeles murmured: "Oh, if George Spelvin were only here. . . . *He* would know just what to do —"

"Well, where is he? Can you get him?" asked the worried producer.

"I'll try my best."

Abeles almost ran from the room and then hurried to the bar downstairs to consider how, where and if he could manufacture the mythical Spelvin.

Luck was with him. Standing alone at the bar was a young fellow with a rakish Broadway bowler over one eye and a cigar tilted in his mouth. He was seriously contemplating the ice in a glass of scotch-

and-soda. His name was William (Billy) Stone and, in later years, he was to become an important figure in the offices of producer John Golden. Abeles quickly collared Stone and rattled off his problem.

"Just say you're Spelvin — that's all," Abeles urged. "Talk wise and tell 'em they're crazy if they let the play drop without another chance."

The rest is history: Stone joined gleefully in the plot. Thompson put up one more check. *Brewster's Millions* was presented and ran for months and for seasons. Thompson cleaned up. Winchell Smith was launched on a career which eventually made him Broadway's first millionaire dramatist. Abeles was established and Billy Stone was rewarded with a small rôle. But it was as "George Spelvin" that he appeared on the program — thus anticipating the tens of thousands of Spelvins who have appeared since.

II

There is no questioning the fact that the lives and fortunes of this group would have been changed had Spelvin never been born. As it was, Smith followed *Brewster* with another smash hit, *Fortune Hunters*,

and the Spelvin ramifications began to spread in many directions. For the trail of young Smith soon crossed that of John Golden, who although a law student at New York University, had been gradually edging toward the showshops. Golden had organized a group of smart young players and writers and called them the Strollers Theater. One of the more flippant members was Rupert Hughes who had written a topical travesty around the bronze blacksmiths atop the historic New York *Herald* building. Young Golden soon attracted such fancy sponsors as the Ogden Millses, the Goelets and the Vanderbilts and was coming along quite nicely when he joined hands with Smith in presenting *Turn to the Right*, first of the big Golden hits. As was Smith's custom throughout his life, he insisted in "a part for Spelvin" and for years that name was in every John Golden cast. In fact, it was in *Lightnin'* that Spelvin had his longest run.

It was William Gillette, however, who first introduced Spelvin as a "double" in *Secret Service*. One of Gillette's publicity men made insistent claims that Gillette was "the father of Spelvin." Shortly before the death of Gillette a challenge was made to "others

with similar claims." But Smith already was gone and so was Abeles. It was Gillette, too, who introduced Spelvin to Maude Adams. Miss Adams was first of the great ladies of the stage to adopt him and the first to take Spelvin on a road tour. He was on the program of *What Every Woman Knows*, *Joan of Arc* and *As You Like It*.

Jacob Adler, of Yiddish Theater fame, was perhaps the greatest actor to use the Spelvin pseudonym. David Belasco, giving Adler a try-out in a small part, had him listed as Spelvin.

In the course of a dozen years Spelvin became a back-stage byword and was credited with feats worthy of a Paul Bunyan. When stage managers were faced with what seemed insurmountable problems they would say, "Aw, let Spelvin do it." Others gave him Gremlin qualities and blamed him for anything that went wrong. Several actors tried to adopt the name permanently. When one of the first of the Moscow Art groups came to Manhattan, Broadwayites were all but bowled from their seats when they saw in their programs the name of Gregor Spelvanovich.

Only once did he get to Hollywood. That was when Jesse Lasky gave *Brewster's Millions* a film pro-

duction and flashed on the screen the names of the original cast. Within the last dozen years or so, press agents have gratuitously presented him with children and relatives. Mrs. Frank Craven, wife of the actor-producer, was responsible for "Georgette Spelvin," a daughter. She appeared in *Riddle Me This*, a mystery thriller. Throughout the first act a corpse lay limp upon a couch. When someone asked who would play the rôle, Mrs. Craven stated, "Why, Georgette Spelvin, of course." Miss Edythe Elliott was the young actress hidden behind this disguise. Some of Broadway's best journalistic kibitzers insisted they had discovered a long-lost son in *Gentlemen of the Press*, when it was presented by Ward Morehouse, theatrical paragrapher. But a George Jr., historians noted, had already been used in *Salt Water*.

There were some amusing incidents which stemmed from "doubling in brass." Frequently an actor, upon his first appearance under his own name, would get little acclaim but when he came on as Spelvin would be praised by critics and audience. Brock Pemberton carried this "gag" to a hilarious conclusion when he produced *Swords*. Upon the entrance of the George Spelvin

character, groups in the audience would break into applause. Pemberton charged that a "Spe'vin claque" was being paid for this. The actor cast as Spelvin complained to Kenneth MacGowan, then a drama critic, and MacGowan started a vigorous exchange of personalities.

Only once was any statistical check of Spelvin made. This was some fifteen years ago when the fabulous fellow was at the peak of success. At that time, it appeared, Spelvin was playing in nine different theatres, and eleven different rôles, in one night, being billed simultaneously in San Francisco, Chicago, St. Louis and Boston, in addition to New York. Just how many actors have been Spelvin is anybody's guess. But some idea may be gained from the only three-year tabulation ever made. This showed that Spelvin had appeared in 20,000 performances in 900 days and had taken 210 different rôles ranging from a policeman crossing the stage to a Roman gladiator.

With such a background, it becomes hard to associate the original Spelvin with George Spelvin, Average American, or with anything average, for that matter. Champions of theatrical lore insist that he be given his proper niche in the drama's Hall of Fame.

► *Problems of sanitation and
morals beset our capital.*

WASHINGTON GETS SOILED

BY CARLISLE BARGERON

WASHINGTON, once known as the City Beautiful, tends to become the City Awful under war-time pressure. Behind the façade of majestic masonry, pretentious homes and spacious avenues, of marble edifices in which men orate and plan for the world, a Congressional investigating committee has found that 50 per cent of the population live under slum conditions; that children play in sewage filth; that malaria breeding stagnant pools are more numerous than the monuments the capital boasts.

It found that teen age youngsters constitute a major problem of delinquency; venereal disease runs rampant; meningitis in the first three months of 1943 had increased three times over what it was in 1942; typhus bearing rats are to be found in the best places; tuberculars among the newcomers to the city are endangering the health of those with whom, under crowded conditions, they live and work.

Like any other boom town, the nation's capital is suffering from the effects of overcrowding. There was a time when the burning of soft coal was not permitted in the city without a special screening device on the chimney. Enforcement of this ordinance was dropped in the early years of the depression. Within its glistening marble framework the city has been becoming more and more sooty and rusty ever since. It is today like a family that keeps its living room clean but its kitchen dirty.

The population of Washington, given by the 1940 census as 663,091, is now more than 1,000,000. These people are crowded in a city of ten miles square — one hundred square miles in which no skyscrapers are permitted and of which Government buildings or enterprises occupy approximately 50 percent. They do not include the thousands who work in Washington but live in Maryland and Virginia. Altogether, it is estimated, 1,500,000

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live in the so-called Metropolitan area. Housing authorities say that if 200,000 families were removed from the city it would still be overcrowded, and that there are 20,000 homes which should be torn down.

The Congressional investigators found that about half the slum population, roughly 500,000 persons, lives in an area slightly larger than three square miles of the 100 square mile area. A cross-section study of 231 typical families showed that seventy-four of them, comprising 412 individuals, were living in what the investigators described as "deplorable" conditions; 6 per cent had no running water; 22 per cent had no toilet facilities other than outdoor privies; 27 per cent had no baths; 16 per cent were lighted by kerosene lamps; 65 per cent were without furnace heat and 53 per cent used either kerosene or coal stoves for cooking. This three mile area is within the shadow of the Capitol. In it are some 1000 outdoor privies and 10,000 outside flushed toilets, the drainage of which, in many instances, flows out over streets in which children are playing and over water pipes.

For years there has been agitation in Washington for the removal of its slum dwellings, particularly those in alleys and occupied by Negroes. Until the coming of the

New Deal, approximately nothing was done. It was difficult to convince the city's predominantly transient population, including the members of Congress, the great majority of them from rural or urban communities which are not as modern and clean as Washington seemingly is, that the problem really existed. And Congress is Washington's city council. It controls the city's purse strings.

The New Deal embarked upon a slum clearance program. Some progress was made, but it was slow because with this same New Deal came a steady population increase and the emphasis had to be more on building than on tearing down. With the coming of the war the program was halted in its tracks. Crowded before Pearl Harbor, the city has now burst at the seams. The original slum dwellings have become worse, and dwellings which formerly would not have been considered slums have now achieved that status or are on the borderline. For example, the city now has 4483 officially listed rooming houses of three or more stories and only 877 have fire escapes. There are 9067 rooming houses of all types listed; the investigators found from four to ten persons living in a single room was the rule, not the exception.

The unsanitary conditions are

not confined to the district designated as a slum area or to the borderline places. In Arlington County, just across the Potomac river, homeless war workers and families of the armed services pressed the builders last winter to be permitted to occupy homes in a new development before it was completed. The result was a community without streets or proper drainage. Children played in mudholes and raw drainage. Dysentery spread among the children. Next to Arlington County is the community of Falls Church. Here the Congressional probers found that sewage washed into open gutters and drained into a stream which feeds the water supply of the adjacent suburban city of Alexandria. In self-protection the authorities of Alexandria had to apply such strong chemical treatment that the water was almost undrinkable.

Nor are germ-carrying rats confined to the slum or borderline homes. They are particularly a problem to the city's oldest, but one of its most substantial, sections, known as Georgetown. For years there has been a "back to Georgetown" movement among people in the higher income brackets. The old homes are remodelled and modernized, but the underlying hygienic problems remain. Rats

infest many leading hotels and eating places, and in the dining rooms of the famous National Press Club mice and roaches are no longer a shocking novelty. There is a rat control program for the city but it is handicapped by the manpower shortage.

It was developed by the Congressional committee that normally clean people living in unsatisfactory surroundings tend to become lax in their living habits. Particularly was this true in the handling of garbage. The garbage collection officials were taken to task. They were given an additional appropriation of \$250,000 to add to their collection service. But they convinced the committee that the greatest fault lay with the carelessness of the people themselves. Local courts are flooded with complaints by neighbors against neighbors charging neglect and misconduct in the handling of garbage. Those making the good fight for decent cleanliness under unfavorable conditions are not to be envied.

There has been a pronounced deterioration of sanitary conditions in the city generally. Overtaxed laundries, harassed by manpower shortage, also suffer frequent breakdowns in machinery. Again and again they must refuse to accept work for weeks at a time. This is

reflected not only in the problems of the householders, but in the soiled linen of the hotels and restaurants. The WPB has, in fact, suggested that table cloths in the latter be changed only once for each meal. While this situation is not peculiar to Washington, it has more serious consequences in a city so abnormally crowded.

On at least two occasions in the past year ambulances have had to haul a score or more workers away from the vast Pentagon Building, the War Department monstrosity housing 40,000 employes across the river in Virginia. They were suffering from food poison.

The Congressional investigators expressed grave concern over the number of cases of tuberculosis in advanced stages they found among newcomers to the city, particularly women. In most instances these people had been employed for only ninety days or six months and had the disease when they arrived, but it had made rapid progress under the difficult living conditions and constituted a danger to their associates. In departments employing as many as 60,000 persons not a single medical officer is provided; private industry, in normal times, has found it to be profitable to have medical supervision for as few as a thousand workers. Applicants for

Government jobs must present a physician's health certificate or undergo an examination by the Civil Service Commission, but it was found that neither the examinations nor the certificates include either tuberculosis or blood test.

II

Washington may lead in other respects, but it takes second place among military centers in the matter of venereal diseases among soldiers and sailors. Military authorities will not disclose which city can lay claim to the dubious distinction of exceeding the capital; neither will they discuss, for obvious reasons, the relative military populations. But the situation in Washington may be appraised from the fact that in the last six months of 1942 there were 1109 army infections, which was a 147 per cent increase over the first six months of the year. Figures are not yet available for 1943 but the authorities report there has been no decrease. As of mid-July 1943, the Navy was authority for the statement that although a nationwide study had shown a 42 per cent decline in venereal infections among sailors for the country as a whole, there had been an increase in Washington. In September it was estimated

there were 42,000 cases of syphilis in the city, only 8000 of which are under treatment; and three times as many cases of gonorrhea with only 2000 under treatment.

A few months ago a woman employee of the War Department was arrested on charges of seeking to entice young girls to become prostitutes. At the height of the Congressional Committee's investigation, in the late spring, the FBI raided a place known as the Hopkins Institute, which had for years operated a "call" business in one of the most respectable sections of the city, under the guise of a massage parlor. Just why this glamorous agency interested itself has never been explained except that on the Institute's book of clients, the names of Senators and a succession of Latin American diplomats were found. The subsequent tribulations of the Institute and its occupants were the object of much attention in the Washington press. But night after night the police raid places of lesser repute. Recently they brought 150 persons out of one place. They hammer away continually after the professionals without, however, making any appreciable dent. Indeed, they were complimented by the Congressional committee for their diligence.

Shortly after the outbreak of

war, the superintendent of police, Major Edward J. Kelly, called the city's bellboys together, and appealed to them on patriotic grounds to cooperate with the police in the matter of prostitutes operating in the hotels. He says he has received more than a fair degree of cooperation. The police, however, are not very strongly supported by the attitude of the local courts. The city has no effective check over its diseased prostitutes, or no way of treating them if they are known to be diseased. A women's clinic is operated for a few hours in the morning, but a prostitute who gets her release on collateral before 7:30 in the morning or on week ends goes unexamined. Those who are detected are given treatment only so long as their confinement lasts, whereas they should have treatment for a year. If they are released on payment of a fine they receive no forced treatment at all. For years there have been unsuccessful efforts to obtain an isolation hospital in which these known cases would be quarantined for treatment.

The Congressional investigation came about after a young woman reporter on the *Washington Post*, Mary Spargo, looked into the complaints of residents that they had been trying for several days to get

the authorities to remove a dead horse from their neighborhood. Her report brought a barrage of complaints from others about conditions around them. Miss Spargo conferred with the congressman from her home district in Vermont, Charles A. Plumley. After a preliminary examination he made a speech in the House of Representatives. "An epidemic which swept Washington today," he warned, "would cripple the very nerve center of the war efforts of the United Nations. All the conditions are here which will make for an epidemic, which have made for epidemics in the past."

The investigating committee was authorized and labored for three months. It presented its findings to Congress on June 25. What has been done in the light of its report? Approximately nothing. The practical proposals included appointment of a sanitary engineer to serve as assistant to the health officer; an increased staff of inspectors for the Health Department; an increased budget for the Health Department, in proportion to the increased population; regulations for compulsory treatment of venereally infected men rejected for military service; complete medical examinations for all women seized in vice raids; increased funds for the war

on disease-carrying rodents. Three months later, nothing had been done on these and an array of other recommendations.

The larger part of the report was devoted to housing congestion as the over-all health menace in Washington. It was brought out in the testimony that 80 per cent of the city's building contractors have ceased private dwelling construction because of the difficulty of getting priorities. The committee recognized this difficulty but refrained from suggesting that Congress do anything about it. After all, the acute housing shortage is chronic in practically all war production areas. The prevailing official attitude is that of holding your breath and shooting the works to get the war over. The problems of Washington have a dimension of drama because it is the heart and brain of the national war effort, and in a sense of the whole United Nations effort; but they are no different in kind from those faced by scores of other communities. There is no point in distributing blame.

All the same, there are many responsible men in official Washington who believe strongly that if the war is to last as long as the official spokesmen say, we had better take serious inventory of the home front and make some needed repairs.

CLINICAL NOTES

USA, BRITAIN, USSR

FEW political writers and speakers are so naïve that they do not know of the fateful political duel under way between Russia and the English-speaking allies. If Americans have heard little about it, the reason is that most commentators still look on the whole subject as untouchable. How these hush-hush boys expect our country to meet and solve the great problems growing out of the relations between democracies on one side and a dictatorship on the other without benefit of an enlightened and sympathetic public opinion is not clear.

William Philip Simms of the *Scripps-Howard Newspapers* and Forrest Davis of the *Saturday Evening Post* are important exceptions to the general rule of a reticence that amounts almost to a conspiracy of silence. When the whole story is told, the American people will have cause to thank them and a very few others for having had the wisdom to take the public into confidence on a struggle in the political sphere as vital, in its way, as the struggle in the military sphere.

Mr. Simms has had the courage, in the face of ardent delusions on all things Russian, to put the question of Moscow's claims to the Baltic States and Eastern Poland in the right perspective, as a test of the United Nations ability to protect its smaller members against the appetites of its larger members.

Mr. Davis has dared to cut through the deceptions (that deceive nobody but the American people) in connection with Winston Churchill's proposals for a permanent Anglo-American alliance, even unto a common citizenship, labeling it plainly for what it is: an answer to Soviet Russia's unilateral decisions on the fate of its small neighbors and all Europe.

In his Guildhall speech on June 30 and even more so in his subsequent Harvard address, the Prime Minister in effect proposed an "intimate alliance" of his country and ours as a counterpoise to the Greater Russia being projected by Stalin. The Guildhall pronouncement came after Russia had broken relations with Poland and set up its

own communist-led Union of Polish Patriots and its own Polish Army. The stronger and more explicit Harvard speech came after Moscow's thinly disguised offer of a negotiated peace to a Germany — almost any kind of Germany — without Hitler. It also followed closely on the Moscow announcement, timed demonstratively during the Quebec conference, of Maxim Litvinoff's recall as Ambassador to Washington.

In effect Mr. Churchill was saying: British and American air and naval power, backed by the world's most advanced technological civilizations, are more than a match for Russia, and Stalin should recognize this "hard, cold, vindictive truth" (Churchill's words). As soon as this is understood we can get together as equals to work out joint instead of unilateral solutions for the problems of postwar Europe.

It is not altogether accidental that negotiations for a Russian-American-British conference thereupon took a long leap forward. Support of the Churchill thesis by both Democratic and Republican leaders and newspapers in the United States has undoubtedly meant more to the hard-boiled master of the Kremlin than the passionate serenades of Wallace and Willkie under his windows. Stalin

despises sentimentalism. It has meant to him, we may be quite sure, that he will have to deal with his major allies together and not, as he had thought possible, with each of them separately.

Whatever doubts he might have retained after Mr. Churchill's straight talk were wiped out by the President's message to Congress on September 17. Mr. Roosevelt flatly denied the Moscow claim that our African and Italian campaigns and our aerial attack on Germany were not helping Russia. More significantly, he declared:

But there is one thing I want to make perfectly clear: When Hitler and the Nazis go out the Prussian military clique must go with them. The war-breeding gangs of militarists must be rooted out of Germany — and out of Japan — if we are to have any real assurance of future peace.

Though few American commentators and editorial writers seem to have had the sense to grasp it, the Kremlin knows well enough that this was the American answer to the Moscow-sponsored Free Germany Committee offer to deal with the German military leaders if they got rid of Hitler.

The logic of Mr. Churchill's general proposal for an Anglo-American alliance is too compelling to be dismissed, even if the crisis in our relations with Russia which brought

it into the open is happily resolved. It takes no profound knowledge of history to recognize that two World Wars might have been headed off had the aggressor nations known definitely and well in advance that a quarrel with England meant also a quarrel with the United States. Even if the wars were inevitable, it is obvious that our victory could have come sooner and been more decisive if there had been no uncertainty about America's rôle and no costly delays. Surely Russia, which has an agreement with Britain, which has proposed one to Czechoslovakia, and which, in fact, pioneered in the technique of dual agreements within larger groupings, cannot reasonably object to an Anglo-American alliance.

—E. L.

WHERE IS THE CLERGY?

ONE of the minor phenomena of World War II, in this country, is the comparative quiet of the clergy. In the last war they split the heavens with their denunciations of the Hun. The verbal onslaughts of such divines as the Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis and the Rev. Dr. S. Parkes Cadman will be recalled by Americans in their late thirties or over, but there were other mighty wielders of the theological sword: the Rev. Dr. Charles

Aubrey Eaton, the Rev. Dr. Howard Ganster, the Rev. Dr. Henry van Dyke, the Rev. Dr. Charles Parkhurst, and, of course, the Rev. Billy Sunday. Most of them are now in the heaven they yearned for, and almost none have appeared to take their places. Bishop William T. Manning, to be sure, was one of the first to see the full meaning of Hitlerism, as were a number of other ministers — but they have been very few in number and strangely reserved in their public utterances.

One wonders why. Certainly the spiritual issues involved in the present world struggle are far more obvious and numerous than in the last one, and from all reports the soldiers and sailors are now more anxious for the guidance and counsel of chaplains, who seem to be slow in joining the services.

—C. A.

NEGROES WITHOUT SELF-PITY

I MAY be wrong, but it seems to me that what happened at a Negro meeting in Florida the other day is important — important not only for Negroes and not only for Florida. I think that it strikes a new, wholesome note in the black man's relation to his native America.

It was a meeting of the State-

wide Negro Defense Committee. C. D. Rogers, President of the Central Life Insurance Company of Tampa, got up and said: "I will answer that question of whether we will be allowed to take part in civic, state and national affairs. The answer is — yes!" Then he explained why and how he had come to take part in the affairs of his city.

"The truth is," he said, "that I am not always asked. Certainly in the beginning I was not. As a citizen, I saw no reason why I should wait for an invitation to interest myself in things that concerned me just as much as they did other residents of Tampa. I went and I asked what I could do. Knowing that I was interested and willing to do my part, the authorities began to notify me ahead of proposed meetings, and invited me to participate. I see no point in hanging back, and then complaining that I have been excluded from civic affairs.

"I know that citizenship implies duties as well as privileges. It is time that we Negroes learn that you can't get something for nothing. Negroes, merely by being Negroes, are not exempted from the natural laws of existence. If we expect to be treated as citizens, and considered in community affairs,

we must come forward as citizens and shoulder our part of the load. The only citizens who count are those who give time, effort and money to the support and growth of the community. *Share the burden where you live!*"

And then J. Leonard Lewis, attorney for the Afro-American Life Insurance, had something to say. First he pointed to the growing tension between the races throughout the country. Then he, too, broke tradition. The upper-class Negro, he said, must take the responsibility for the Negro part in these disturbances.

"It is not enough," he said, "for us to sit by and say 'We didn't do it. Those irresponsible, uneducated Negroes bring on all this trouble.' We must not only do nothing to whip up the passions among them, we must go much further. We must abandon our attitude of aloofness to the less educated. We must get in touch with them *and head off these incidents before they happen.*"

"How can we do that? There is always some man among them who has great prestige with them. He can do what we cannot do, because he is of them and understands them. If he says fight, they fight. If he says, 'Now put away that gun and be quiet,' they are quiet. We must confer with these people, and

cooperate with them to prevent these awful outbreaks that can do no one any good and everybody some harm. Let us give up our attitude of isolation from the less fortunate among us, and do what we can for peace and good-will between the races."

Not anything world-shaking in such speeches, you will say. Yet something profound has happened, of which these speeches are symptoms and proofs. Look back over your shoulder for a minute. Count the years. If you take in the twenty-odd years of intense Abolitionist speaking and writing that preceded the Civil War, the four war years, the Reconstruction period and recent Negro rights agitations, you have at least a hundred years of indoctrination of the Negro that he is an object of pity. Becoming articulate, this was in him and he said it. "We were brought here against our will. We were held as slaves for two hundred

and forty-six years. We are in no way responsible for anything. We are dependents. We are due something from the labor of our ancestors. Look upon us with pity and give!" The whole expression was one of self-pity without a sense of belonging to America and what went on here.

Put that against the statements of Rogers and Lewis, and you get the drama of the meeting. The audience agreed and applauded. Tradition was tossed overboard without a sigh. Dr. J. R. E. Lee, president of Florida A and M College for Negroes, got up and elaborated upon the statements: "*Go forward with the nation. We are citizens and have our duties as such.*" Nobody mentioned slavery, Reconstruction, nor any such matter. It was a new and strange kind of Negro meeting — without tears of self-pity. It was a sign and symbol of something in the offing.

ZORA NEALE HURSTON

The eager and often inconsiderate appeals of reformers and revolutionists are indispensable to counterbalance the inertness and fossilism making so large a part of human institutions.

— WALT WHITMAN: *Democratic Vistas*.



► *We can be proud of these
American characteristics.*

WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE ARE WE?

BY ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

BEFORE we start rearranging the rest of the world after this war, we had better find out what kind of people we are ourselves. Nations and families often do not know what they are like until some outsider, say an aunt, comes along and tells them.

I had a New England aunt whose chief business in life was telling our family our strong points and our weak points, especially our weak. She came twice a year and straightened us all out, with herb remedies and moral precepts. Some of our worst features, we discovered from Aunt Emma, were minor habits that gave a wrong impression of us to the outside world.

Minor peculiarities and odd ways of doing things can exasperate one's neighbors more than major sins. It has always been so among nations, since history began. The old Akkadians mortally estranged the people

of Ur by wearing beards. The people of Ur ate fat meat, and the Akkadians hated them for that habit and did their best to exterminate them. Underneath these superficial differences these nations had many sterling traits in common. And if they had been able to see these, they would have built up a civilization that would have defied the Chaldeans and Babylonians for centuries. But they could not see their common humanity for the whiskers and fat meat. So they fought each other and perished. And the Babylonians and Chaldeans—who wore whiskers and ate fat meat also, by the way—came and possessed their lands.

It is good to have a chance to see ourselves through other nations' eyes. For maybe we Americans have some ways of doing things that conceal our good points from our neighbors across the water. If

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it isn't whiskers, maybe it is something just as obscuring.

I have been lucky. Twice I have lived for long periods in countries overseas and so have been able to get a perspective on Americans I never would have got in any other way. First time, it was France, and I was a soldier, in World War I. It was a terrific shock to me to discover what the French thought of their American allies. It wasn't the grownup French who shocked me. They were too polite and careful of my feelings. It was the French children — girls in black dresses and boys in pinafores so you couldn't be sure they were boys till they turned around and showed they had a fork in their clothes after all. The French children thought all Americans were gluttons, drunkards, and overgrown boys. Not just one or another of these, but all three. That was their frank opinion. And nobody can be franker than children. Or wiser. Mind you, the French children loved the American soldiers. That was partly why they were so frank. They always poured out and got underfoot when our band played, and they shared all our meals with us while we were in their villages. I ate many a meal with a pair of Gallic breeches, yearning to be filled, straddling each of my knees.

I know why those French children thought us all gluttons and drunkards and boys. They trusted their eyes. To their eyes we were all three. For we were not used to their wine. A drink that a five-year-old French boy could swallow without batting a brunette eyelash knocked the strong blond men in my regiment galley-west. Therefore all Americans were habitually flattened by drink. And we had meat three times a day in our mess. The French children saw it with their own beady eyes. They helped us eat it. French people had meat only once or twice a week. Therefore Americans were all gluttons. And we played with the French children as their fathers and older brothers and uncles never did. We came down to their level and played tag and pitched pennies with them. With only a few of their words, we got on with them splendidly. So all Americans must be overgrown boys.

Out of those three French impressions, two are grounded upon superficialities. But the third is pure gold. We *are* a nation of people who can play easily with our children. We play more with our children than any other people on earth except maybe the Chinese. That is one of the greatest achievements of our civilization and one of our best assets as a nation. I see by

the pictures from Sicily that American doughboys are still taking children on their knees and feeding them and teaching them to smile again in spite of war. We discovered children in our pioneer days, when they were the most important crop that men who had states to settle could raise. We go on paying a lot of attention to that crop. We should thank those French children for calling our attention to our wealth.

II

Then I had a chance to set up housekeeping, when my wife and I were brand-new to each other, in England. It was in a village eight hundred years old. My wife and I got to know everybody in it from Schoolmistress Bley to the Lady of the Manor and on to the red-faced man who swept the street clean with a fagot-broom and slept an hour each noon on his wheelbarrow under our cottage window. We cooked over an open hearth. We played whist and tennis at the Village Institute. We kept hens and part of a pig. We got to know a lot about the English, and they got to know a lot about us in return. For though I was in the University, I was also a father and a householder and so got to know the

older and younger English people who are outside the University family. Older English people are a revelation in warmth, after the rather icy undergraduates. The English mellow late. My wife and I got a thorough education in British democracy such as only those who buy their own breakfast kippers and keep their own house can acquire.

It is what the English taught us about ourselves that I want to talk about.

Of course, after a year or so of being neighbors to us, our English friends took to regarding us as creatures very much like themselves. It came as a surprise to them that fundamentally we were like them. It was amazing, but we were. It makes me think of what one small Englishman, in breeches only as long as a man's hand, said of our first baby. He had been let out of school, in company with all his schoolmates, to see an American infant. And he was bitterly disappointed. I heard him voicing his disappointment under our cottage window. "Why," said he to another boy, "it's just like any baby!" He had expected a swarthy papoose, with feathers and a tomahawk maybe. The pink and gold skin and hair had been a great shock.

But it was because our neighbors

did come to regard us as much the same kind of people as themselves that they became sharp enough to notice and frank enough to tell us what it was that they found in Americans that was fundamentally different from characteristics that are English. And no one can be franker than a cousin, when he gets to know you.

First off, the English agreed with the French children. We paid too much attention to our children. They saw my wife and me with our first-born. They caught me bathing it. They caught me wheeling my first-born in a pram. They caught us building our future life around that infant of ours. It was not an incident. It was a future. So they told us that Americans humor children too much, play with them too much, dress them too well, keep them at home too long — especially if they are boys — and work their fingers to the bone to build security for them. It was too bad. Life went by and left parents just parents.

Guilty, say I! And I am sure most Americans would be proud to plead guilty, too. If Americans overdo things, it is in the best of causes. Children are the most real of real property. My father had ten, and he slaved all his life as a free man, and had a righteous good

time, educating us and building a house or fixing up a farm for each one of us. Of course, none of us living has needed the inheritance. We have been too busy acquiring farms and houses for our own offspring, who probably won't need them.

Our English neighbors were shocked at our doing so much for ourselves, too, and with our own hands. Our passion for labor worried them. I don't know how often they blushed at seeing me bringing parcels on my bike or on the bus. English gentlemen never carried things, they finally blurted out. They never pushed them, either, I discovered. For I scandalized our village by wheeling our baby in the perambulator all through the lanes and to Oxford and beyond. No British father since Hengist and Horsa had ever done such a thing. It was woman's work. Why shouldn't I wheel my own baby? I asked my frank friends who told me it just wasn't done. In England there are two sets of human beings: those who work with their hands and carry things; those who work with their heads and have things brought to them.

The beauty of American history is that we have combined the two sets. Our Yankee sea captains helped build their own ships with ham-

mers and adzes, and helped sail them by using their hands on lines and gear. The wives who sailed with them could be the fine ships' ladies and yet do a good day's housework, too. It is a new woman in civilization who can write in a ship's diary: *Done a big washing and ironing and mended John's pants and went on board of Capt. Thurlow this evening and took tea.* As pioneers, we had to be carpenters and plowers, even when we were law-makers and teachers. We have never got over these basic occupations. Our women sew and wash dishes and children, and then go out and hold their own in cultured conversation. They have always done so. Our men, no matter what estates they have achieved, have never got over Thomas Jefferson's love of making gadgets and doing a little carpentering here and a little plumbing there, for themselves, in between business conferences or state papers.

We are a nation in shirt-sleeves. We like to put our hands in dirt and get it on our trousers, as our ancestors did. We take our coats off and sail into the weeds in the garden, and we lose no caste in the eyes of our neighbor. He is up to the eyes in the "innerds" of his Ford and couldn't see us if he tried.

Oh yes, our English friends took

us to task for Americans' taking their coats off in public and going in shirt and trousers. I had the right come-back for that. Our shirts are finished as decorous outside garments, unlike the frankly night-shirt-like British. Our trousers are outside ones, too. They are not ones that come up to the shoulder blades in unsightly bedroom style. If I wore British pants, I would die before I took my coat off in public!

We Americans are too apt to take chances in matrimony also, we discovered from our English friends. We plunge into matrimony without any adequate preparations, in the way of career or income. We marry young. We marry at first sight, or second. We make mistakes. Again I plead guilty. Our divorce rate is shocking. We marry right out of college often. And even in. We marry on a shoestring. But it is something of a comfort to point out to the world that we Americans, who are so often dubbed crass materialists by the Europeans, have never had the dowry system of Europe or the long-deferred engagements of the English people, who wish to be sure of the economic basis of marriage before they rush into it. We have always divorced marriage from money. We have let affection, and even passion, take

the place of a settlement of money on a wife as the proper foundation for raising a family. We fall in love, rather than fall into a fortune, when we do our leaping. Of course, we make mistakes. But we show more courage and idealism, on the whole, I think, in our daring to rush, young and empty-handed, into the greatest adventure of them all.

And Americans travel too much. Our English villagers were pretty unanimous on that point. Not one of the 463 English adults in our village had ever been to Stratford-on-Avon, forty-two miles to the north. Of course, when one considers what the commercialization of culture has done for Shakespeare's home town, one can sympathize a little with the English. But the villagers had not been to other places much either. They stayed at home pretty much all the time. They had never seen their own cathedrals, or Devon, or Wordsworth's lakes.

Somehow or other, in pleading guilty to this charge of loving to be on the go, I think Americans are to be praised for their desire to broaden themselves by seeing the old cradles in Europe from which their fathers sprang. Of course, there is a lot of lost motion with us. We travel too much for travel's sake. We make

too much of mere sightseeing. Yet hungry-eyed schoolmarm drinking in castles and churches have somehow drunk in a lot of glory and strength that have borne fine fruit in high school courses and made better citizens of lots of young Americans. We have always believed in travel as an educator, just as we have believed in education by lectures. The English have mistrusted both. But naïve as we may seem to them to be, I think we have learned a good deal and grown a good deal towards world citizenship by going over the battlefield of Gettysburg, the Alps, seeing the Grand Canyon and Winchester Cathedral. Odysseus learned a lot that made him a better citizen from travel. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson did, too.

III

Yes, and we make too much of saying *hello* to everybody and being friendly at the least chance. Our English neighbors were sure of that. We depend too much on a surface neighborliness.

Maybe we do. Especially in the states west of the Appalachians. But from having lived in the Hoosier State, I should say that friendliness — even casual surface friendliness — is a good thing to make too

much of. Again it is a pioneer failing, if it is a failing. It is a poetic thing, this going out of ourselves to meet strangers more than halfway. It is the best way to find poems, I have discovered. For, chances are, if you go out of your shell halfway, the stranger will come out of his, sparkling over with poetry. It seems to me that this poetry of human sympathy is a pretty fair foundation for the democracy in the world at large we want to build tomorrow.

And, lastly, we Americans, according to our English neighbors, are forever wanting to change our *status quo*, wanting to get somewhere else from where we are, wanting to become something else. Fishermen's sons want to become mechanics, professors' sons want to become fishermen. Farmers' sons yearn to become railroad men. We are a restless and tiring people. We love change.

We do love change. We are restless. But it seems to me to be a kind of noble restlessness that eats us, and we do want to better ourselves, usually, want to go up in the world, make something more of ourselves, mentally as well as financially, than our fathers left us. Almost every American city is a monument to America's divine discontent. Our cities change shape faster than any

other cities on earth. And usually they do not grow merely in the direction of material improvement. Our tall ugly buildings become the taller lovelier ones of New York's skyline today. Our architecture, our art, our literature, our music, are constantly on the make, as well as our railroads and automobiles. Improvement on one plane very often induces improvement on others.

Every son must rise above his father. That is the New World physics to which we heartily subscribe. It isn't the physics of the Old World. *No river ever rises higher than its source.* That is the physics Europe believed in for two thousand years. But some Europeans would not subscribe to that physics. So they packed up and came over the sea. They wanted a new physics. For that reason men of totally different bloods and religions and political theories came into this wilderness that was America and tried the experiment of mingling bloods and brains. To escape that physics of their ancestors, Englishmen, Scotsmen, Irish, Dutch, French, and Germans bled themselves white, worked their fingers to the bone, fought Philistines more terrible than insect-men from another planet, hungered, thirsted, starved. They believed in the new

physics of a man's improving on the politics and culture and noses and foreheads of his fathers. For this they lived in log huts, plowed among stones and roots, drained marshes, overturned mountains, knew vast loneliness for years and lives on end, endured polar cold, wore out their shoes, put on deer-skin, felled forests, built churches and courthouses and state capitols and hospitals and colleges by the thousands to Europe's hundreds. For this they dared the dangerous experiment of giving schooling to all, of making rail-splitters and farmers the leaders of the people, of making fast, fine vehicles the property of every family. For this they moved mountains and sweat blood.

It was not enough for us to believe in common man. We have believed in him from the beginning of our history. The "century of the common man" has been about three centuries' long so far. It was an extra belief that kept us going through Indian wars and Civil War — the belief that the common man can become an uncommon man. We have already produced a lot of

him. Jefferson, born to silks and daring to make farmers and day-laborers into the cornerstones of the state, was one. So was the man who dared give the black people equality with the white. So were the ministers of the gospel and bankers who dared put college education into the poorest man's reach. So were the millionaires who dared spread free libraries and museums over the country. So were the benefactors who built great foundations in medicine and scientific research. We are a nation built squarely on the risk of improving ourselves to the limit of the blue sky.

I am mighty glad my neighbors in France and England, through their criticism of our outside appearance, called my attention to the possibilities we Americans have as potential leading citizens in the world democracy to come. Great love for children, eagerness to learn by travel, daring in social experiments, friendliness, and a profound passion for improving ourselves ought to stand us in good stead in the new turn history will take after this war.



THE WORLD'S RICHEST MINE

BY ROSS L. HOLMAN

THE earth's most fabulous mine is the ocean. It is chock-full of precious metals and chemicals for which a ration-mad world is starving. It would require only a trickle of its vast resources to break bottlenecks by the dozen and priorities by the score.

This estimate of sea wealth is not the fantasy of a crackpot dreamer, but of highly responsible chemists. Some of the finished products manufactured out of the briny deep are already in wide commercial production and the demands of war are stepping up the output at a greatly increased rate. Sea water contains gold, silver, radium, iodine, salt, bromine, chlorine, copper, calcium and many other elements. A great variety of sea weeds, known collectively as algae, contain still more. The problem of getting these untapped treasures into the service of humanity is no longer one of discovery, but of chemical skill. Un-

like earth mining you don't have to go prospecting all over the ocean's wide expanses for the wealth you are seeking. Each gallon of sea water has just about as much of it as any other gallon.

While it wasn't the first product to which sea water gave birth, magnesium has captured the spotlight as one vital wartime metal that the ocean raised from a condition of scarcity to one of superabundance. Before the first World War, Germany supplied all the magnesium we needed and we needed mighty little. During that conflict the Dow Chemical Company made from its Michigan salt wells the first magnesium manufactured in this country. Up to recently such amounts of this metal as we used came from the ground, but chemists now say that it can be processed from sea water with much less effort because it eliminates the need of washing it from the dirt. The magnesium

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needs of World War II have pushed our prewar production requirements into a demand of astronomical proportions. We use 180 pounds of it in the average airplane to replace 270 pounds of aluminum. Still more of it goes into star shells, signal flares, tracer bullets, incendiary bombs, and what have you. Chemists estimate there are 5,700,000 tons of this metal in each of the ocean's 320,000,000 cubic miles.

Down at Freeport, Texas, Dow's plant uses 300,000,000 gallons a day of Gulf water to help manufacture the yearly 400,000,000-pound war and civilian demand for magnesium. That sounds like a whale of a lot of water to be strained for a little metal, but even at such rate of consumption it will be twenty-six years before we can use up the first cubic mile in meeting our annual requirements. The plant is located on one side of a long peninsula jutting into the gulf. The water is pumped into the plant from this side. After processing it is run into the sea from the other shore of the peninsula so as not to dilute the unprocessed water on the intake side. To get the metal out of this briny liquid requires three steps. You first mix lime water with sea water to convert its soluble magnesium salts into milk of magnesia. The milk of magnesia is then treated

with acid to convert it into a kind of molten product called magnesium chloride. This is charged with electric current. This final process yields solid magnesium at one electrode and chlorine gas at the other.

Chlorine gas, by the way, is another sea water product of great potential war value. We can use it to choke the Japs in gas warfare if they start anything funny in that direction.

II

Mining salt from sea water is an old, old story. It has acquired new interest, however, because it gives us by-products of important war and postwar value. Most American manufacturers get their salt from salt wells rather than the sea, but the sea is still the principal source in several maritime countries. Salt is one of the most abundant products of the sea. Like many other mineral constituents it was washed into the great deep by nature's sewer system, the rivers and small streams which drain the earth's landed area. While salinity varies in different parts of its vast expanse, the ocean has an average of 3.5 per cent total salts. The Pacific Ocean alone contains enough salt to put a layer of it a mile deep over the entire United States.

Salt is manufactured from sea water by allowing it to flow into shallow artificial basins along the beaches in the drier sections and letting the sun evaporate the water. The water reaches these isolated ponds through a series of channels. In the processing steps a mother liquor called "bitterns" is recovered, from which are derived potash, bromine, Epsom salts and magnesium chloride.

Salt is also the cheapest and most plentiful source of sodium, chlorine and sodium carbonate. More than 3,000,000 tons of the latter are used each year in the manufacture of glass, soap and paper. Out of a compound of sodium and chlorine we get sodium lye, or caustic soda, used in making rayon, cellulose film, soap and other products.

Probably the most important by-products of salt manufacture used in the war effort are bromine and chlorine, both of which are also by-products of the sea water magnesium plants. Bromine is employed in the manufacture of high octane gasoline. The principal military uses of chlorine, aside from war gases, are in bleaching of cotton linters to make smokeless powder and in making tetrachloride for smoke screens.

Our biggest pile of mined gold is in Fort Knox, Kentucky. Our

largest supply of unmined gold is in the ocean. How to make the sea shake loose this metal in paying quantities has intrigued the imagination of scientists and dream chasers for many years. Using electrochemical processes somewhat like those employed in electroplating, the sea has been made to give up its gold, but as yet it costs five times as much to mine sea water for this metal as the extracted gold is worth.

A possibility of reducing the cost of extraction to a profitable level was suggested by Dr. Colin G. Fink of Columbia University. In ordinary electroplating of other metals the metal is deposited on the cathode, the negative terminal. When an effort is made to plate gold out of sea water by this method the invisible colloidal gold particles precipitate so rapidly they fail to collect in the visible crystalline form.

But by using a rapidly spinning cathode instead of the ordinary stationary one you can get a distinctly visible gold deposit. It is the cost of providing the spinning cathode that thus far makes this method unusable. "It is felt that on the basis of this discovery," said Dr. Fink, "we have advanced one step closer to the commercial recovery of gold from sea water."

III

Many of the ocean's chemicals are stored in the 8000 or more species of plants that grow in the sea. Through the processing of marine vegetation scientists hope to recover some of these treasures more easily than from the water itself. We usually apply the term "algae" to marine plant life, though some vegetation is excluded from this general classification. Sea plants under this head have a variation in size comparable with those that grow on dry earth and range from the microscopic diatoms to those of forest tree proportions. They are nourished by the water in which they live and in this way collect some of the sea's chemical materials that science is using and others it hopes to use.

Since the war started, the use of seaweed fertilizer in England has increased at a phenomenal rate. Imports of commercial potash have been cut but seaweed is found to have twice as much potash per ton as barnyard manure. It also has 50 per cent more phosphoric acid, a lot of mineral salts and a small amount of nitrogen. It would be hard to find any product that more completely fills the fertilizer needs of land. Those who harvest it get from one to eight dollars a ton.

Dulse is a marine product that grows among rocks which the tide covers and uncovers. To harvest it you have to snatch it from the rocks between tides and then skidoo until the next tidal intermission. It contains iodine, mineral salts and is good to eat. If you want a mess for dinner put it in a pan and fry it as soon as picked. It has some commercial value and is shipped from one part of the country to the other.

One seaweed that has recently boomed is kelp. It is the prime source of algin, though it has previously been used for potash and iodine. Algin is a kind of sugar product employed as an emulsifying agent in salad dressing, chocolate milk drinks, ice creams, etc. It is extracted from kelp after this weed has been dried, pulverized and treated with alkali.

The most impressive thing about the kelp plant is that there is a tremendous amount of it. It grows from the sea bottom as high as several hundred feet. It is harvested by enormous scissors that clip it within three feet of the surface without injuring it. Harvesting kelp is a big industry and it produces about a half billion dollars' worth of products a year. While sea water itself has lots of iodine and potash, industry finds

it easier to process these minerals from kelp after it has collected them from the water. Kelp is also used for paper and insulation.

The biggest war bonanza in marine growths is carrageen. This is a kind of moss that grows on the rocky sea bottom along the Atlantic Coast. For many years people along the carrageen sections eked out a starvation living harvesting this Irish moss at two or three cents a pound. Then, because of newly discovered uses and a shut-off of imports, a man-size boom exploded right in their faces. Food specialists found it had a high gelatin content that could be used in soda fount mixtures. It can provide the base for certain puddings, jellies and syrups. It is also rich in iodine and sulphur.

The price jumped from two cents to twenty-five cents a pound. Towns in the carrageen areas bristled with sudden prosperity. Old men, young girls, boys, fishermen and whole families go out from shore in small boats armed with sacks and forks, wade in water up to their shoulders, and bring in \$25 to \$30 worth per person at a time. High school boys have sold enough in two summers to pay their way through college.

While we have mentioned only a few of the products extracted

from marine vegetation we are just beginning to explore its vast possibilities. One scientist has even learned how to manufacture coal out of it. At the Carnegie Institute of Technology Dr. Ernst Berle announced about two years ago a method of producing coal from seaweeds and certain land products. It takes nature millions of years to manufacture coal, but Dr. Berle can make it in one hour and thus speed up the conditioning process by a few eternities.

IV

We are not only mining the sea for minerals and chemicals but we are going beneath the ocean floor for new worlds to conquer. One of the products we now find there in increasing abundance is oil. Many scientists predict that at the present rate of consumption the supply of petroleum in this country will be exhausted in fourteen years. If oil can be discovered beneath the ocean in the same recoverable quantities as in dry land areas one of our bottleneck anxieties will be eased for generations to come.

So far, our facilities for ocean drilling are sufficient only for shallow areas. If the sea is found to be a rich field for exploration it is reasonable to believe that deep

water prospecting will follow. The Russians have extended their Baku oil fields far into the Caspian waters. Many profitable oil wells have been drilled off the shore of California. They were bored at the extreme end of piers stretching into the water. Some of them are drilled slantwise from the shore to reach oil deposits below the ocean floor.

Off the shore of Galveston Bay the Standard Oil Company has drilled several wells. In that bay the company engineers made seismograph surveys of 263,000 sub-ocean acres. The wells were drilled from pile foundations and sunken barges at a distance of one to two miles from shore. Oil slicks have been discovered on the water as far as 100 miles from the shore, which suggests the possibility of new oil fields all over this vast unexplored area.

Another mineral found under the ocean floor is iron. This metal is mined under the sea at Newfoundland by means of a tunnel that extends two miles under the water from the shore.

Besides providing a vast storehouse of raw material for our industrial economy the sea may some day be mined for the electric power to process its own products. Harnessing the force represented

by the ebb and flow of tides has long intrigued the imagination of engineers. The abandoned Passamaquoddy project in Maine was an effort in this direction. The failure thus far to bridle tidal energy is due primarily to the fact that most authorities in the field believe a way has not yet been found to do it economically.

It is easy, of course, to overestimate our marine assets, but this vast untapped treasure house is a new hope to a bottleneck world. While we were being plagued with a scarcity of raw materials a bountiful nature has dumped a whole ocean full of them right into our laps. In every cubic mile of sea water are 160,000,000 tons of chemical elements. Included in every cube of water this size are \$25,000,000 worth of gold, \$60,000,000 worth of iodine, 250,000 tons of bromine, 5,700,000 tons of magnesium — and the end is not yet. The total value of all the materials in that one cubic mile is at least five billion dollars. Multiply that by 320,000,000 and you have a staggering idea of the economic value of the world's biggest piece of undeveloped real estate. Until they can be recovered, however, sea treasures are worth no more to us than gold on the planet Mars.

THE THEATRE

BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

Romance Yesterday — And Today

THE best answer to those younger critics who deride any faintest testimonial to the romantic stage of the past is to be found in the circumstance that when the contemporary theatre seeks to adopt a romantic air it has to borrow it from that very bygone stage. Lacking such romance on its own, it is forced to dig up those musical shows and operettas which induced in the audiences of other days that purple mood which remains ever one of the theatre's most welcome narcotics. It thus is compelled to fall back upon revivals of *Die Fledermaus*, or *Rosalinda*, with its old Strauss waltzes to soothe anew the fancies of later-day audiences; *The Merry Widow*, with Danilò again to sing his Leharian way into the hearts of the vicarious Sonias up in the balcony; *The Vagabond King*, with its consoling tale of a poor poet made proud monarch of France for a day; *The Student Prince*, with its royalty melting before the charm of a little Heidelberg waitress and its melodic tributes to a time that even then had already

passed into the recesses of fond recollection; *The Chocolate Soldier*, with its Oscar Straus souvenirs of a jazzless era; and the mythology sung by Offenbach and the blossom-time love sung by Schubert.

While in the way of dramatic quality our theatre certainly indicates a great improvement over the one that our fathers knew and peculiarly relished, it just as certainly in its other branches of entertainment lacks the romantic flavor that our fathers knew and far less peculiarly revelled in. Save alone for the two Jerome Kern exhibits, *Show Boat* and *Music In The Air*, presented respectively in 1929 and 1932, the stage, though it has offered a number of very worthy musical shows, has not provided any which have permeated their auditors with that half-sad, half-smiling, boozy feeling which so often was their grant in a remoter day. An *Oklahoma!* may induce a transitory such feeling when one looks at Lemuel Ayres' Grant Wood-Thomas Benton scenic paraphrases of the sweeping South-

west countryside and when one hums along with its "People Will Say" tune, which at that brings up visions not of wondrous Ruritania princesses or the moonlit winding Nile but of hand-holding with a cutie in the Savoy-Plaza lounge. And now and then something equally exceptional may for a moment or two cause the mind pleasurably to wander afield from the prosaic immediateness and pick clover in the imagination's happy hunting grounds. But for the overwhelming part the mood inspired in one is as removed from the starlit and cloud-woven as that inspired by J. K. Lasser's *Your Income Tax*, even in its 1937 edition.

II

Where romance is attempted today, the results, to say the least, are slightly confusing. For few will deny that it isn't easy to sink oneself in the warm stream of reverie while contemplating, as in *Early To Bed*, young love blossoming in a bawdy house; or, as in *Something For The Boys*, a more adult love involving a lady who at one point in the proceedings gets herself up as a low-comedy cigar-store Indian; or, as in many another melody show, a grand passion expressed in lyrics dealing with Mrs. Vander-

bilt, Mr. Ickes, Toots Shor, and Jack and Charlie's.

The current frequent tendency to laugh off anything that may be regarded as romantic, customarily praised by amateur intelligences as being a sign of health, is rather a sign of emotional deficiency. Incapable of deep feeling and of sentiment without sentimentality, and devoid of that experience of the world which leaves ever in its wake, however sprayful, a trace of sadness and regret, the purveyors to our musical stage simply conceal in a sissy derision the qualities and attributes they lack. It takes a shameless emotional bravery to write a forthright romantic musical play. It requires only a shameless confession of emotional cowardice, or impotence, to write a romantic spoof, that is, save wit be its portion, which it presently isn't. Only a man contemptuously independent in Æolian emotion can have the nerve to write a song called "The Stars Of Egypt Are In Your Eyes, My Darling." It is the drugstore Romeo or the emotional weakling who in the general run of things writes the one called "I'll Love You, Baby, By The Gowanus Canal."

It is all very well sniffishly to curl a corner of the mouth over some of the romantic business of yesterday's

stage. Some of it, God knows, was pretty innocent and not a little out of keeping with discomfiting truth. Certainly the real Maxim's never in the least resembled the transcendent Everleigh Club of *The Merry Widow's* stage. Certainly anyone who had ever been in the Balkans and had gone bathless for a week had considerable trouble reconciling his recollections with the immaculate splendors of *The Balkan Princess*. And equally certainly the Japan of *The Geisha*, with its long, slim-legged English and American sing-song girls; or the Spain of *Maritana*, with its ladies of the court mostly looking like Maxine Elliott; or the Italy of *The Fencing Master*, with its plazette in Venice smelling of delicate sachets and its Milan as spick and span as Litchfield, Connecticut; or the Portugal of *The Queen's Lace Handkerchief*, with its inn in the Sierras indistinguishable from the Paris Ritz; or the Poland of *The Beggar Student*, with its peasants conducting a continuous Elsa Maxwell party; or the France of *Madeleine*, or *The Magic Kiss*, with its villagers and courtiers cavorting hand in hand in the gardens of the Château de Grimm; or the Africa of Von Suppe's *A Trip To Africa*, with its Bedouin camp's close resemblance to old Newport at the height of

the season — certainly the realist, contemplating such candied fact, was to be forgiven a wayward smile.

But no matter. Beneath and above it all, even for the recalcitrant realist, there was a genuine romantic cajolery. The moonlight may have been a bit too purple; the stars may have been as large as the argent mirrors over Denver's old Silver Dollar saloon bar; the desert may have seemed to have been laid out by Robert Moses; and none of the black hussars may have had knock-knees or bowlegs. Yet on those stages, take it even from one still often given to deplorable critical railery, there persisted something that has largely disappeared from our stages of today, and that something was the brilliant fiction of undying love, the unabashed song of hearts among the roses, the flowing plumes of princes in armor, and all the throb and derring-do of men and women above the clouds of our commonplace existence. And one gave in to it, one gave in to it irresistibly, and came away, maybe foolishly but all the same unmistakably, with a grand feeling that just around the corner lay a very beautiful world, and that in that very beautiful world one must one day surely share.

And how, save something from

those days is given revival, does one usually come away in this day? One comes away from a *Something For The Boys* with the memory of a plot about a house for aviation officers' wives mistaken for a bordello; from an *Early To Bed* with the memory of a plot about a bordello being mistaken for a girls' boarding school; and from a *Let's Face It* with the memory of a plot about a trio of silly, sexy old hags who take on three young soldiers as gigolos. One comes away, further, from such and other shows with ears still buzzing painfully from dialogic barroom wit in which a male who means to say that he got back on his feet last night becomes confused and says to the blonde that he got his feet on her back last night. And one comes away in general with the memory of lyrics consecrated to the rhyming of Goering with herring and heart-of-my-life with something like tart-of-a-wife, of heroes who drolly slap women on the behind, of heroines who crack jokes about toilet rooms, and of love duets ending in passionate clog dances.

The answer that the younger critics make — and loud — is that we live in a realistic age and that there is small place in our theatre today for the old romantic escape. The answer, I fear, is largely bosh.

Otherwise how account for the enormous success of an *Oklahoma!* which in its timid way makes at least a gesture toward capturing the old trovatore mood and the titles of whose three most popular songs sufficiently indicate their content: *Oh, What A Beautiful Morning*, *The Surrey With The Fringe On Top*, and the before-mentioned *People Will Say We're In Love*? And how account for the great success of *Rosalinda*, the persistent road prosperity of such shows as *Blossom Time*, *The Student Prince*, *Countess Maritza* and the like, a Metropolitan Opera House for the first time in years in the relative black, a Gallo troupe playing to packed houses, and the tremendous sheet-music sales of such songs as *As Time Goes By*, *You'll Never Know*, *In The Blue of the Evening*, and others of a similar nature?

III

The notion that the realistically minded audiences nowadays do not care for romance boils down to the simple fact that they do not care for it when it is presented to them in a shabby manner. Nor, for that matter, did they care for it even in the long past when it was presented to them in that manner. It is thus

and accordingly that the younger critics argue their false general conclusion from the failure of something like *Night Of Love*, which, taking a cue from Al Woods' old farce, *Ladies' Night In A Turkish Bath*, might better have called itself *Night Of Love In a Shubert Storehouse*; or of something like the revived *The New Moon*, which seemed to have been hastily costumed in a couple of hours' Bronx shopping tour and whose scenery looked as if it had been painted by the artist responsible for the Sells-Floto sideshow banners; or of periodic other such shoddy presentations — *The Vagabond King* for one — that couldn't possibly succeed in any theatre that didn't serve free beer and pretzels.

To return to an earlier motif, it isn't the simplest thing in the world to inspire the romantic feeling in audiences, where producers may hope to do so, with the kind of materials they presently often employ. Consider, for instance, the stage settings. In the yesterdays, the scenes relied upon to create that feeling were "The Marchesa's Villa near Venice," "The Court of Palms Outside Prince Guido Malespino's Manor House at Cipriani," "The Governor's Palace On the Island of Estrella," "Ruins of a Castle Near the River Temes,"

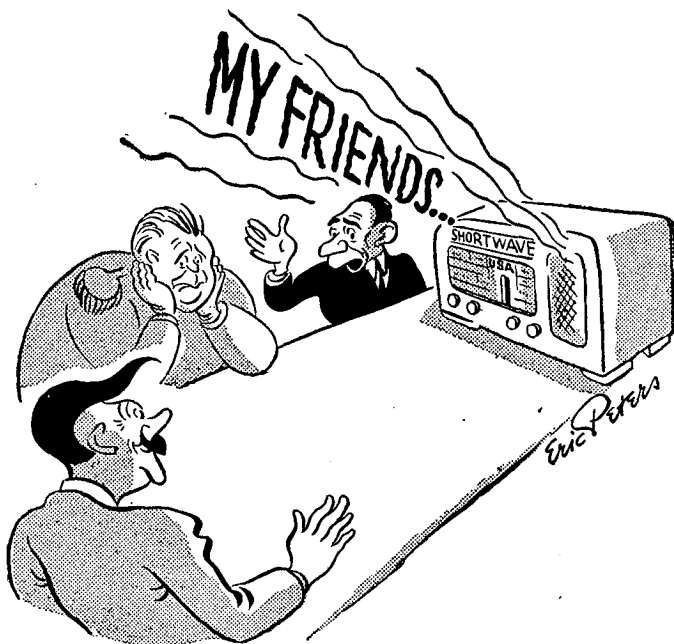
"The Gypsy Encampment on the Road to the Fair at Presburg," and "The Shore of the Mediterranean at Eventide." What, on the other hand, are the kind of scenes intended to make us dream similar warm dreams today? I select at random from among a half-dozen more recent exhibits: "The Corridor of a Texas Hotel," "The Smoke House On Laurey's Farm," "Skidmore's Kitchen Porch," "Lawn of the Keely Cure," "The Boiler Room of the Savoy-Perkins Hotel in Washington, D. C.," and "Erwin's Home, Jackson Heights."

Consider in turn, for another example, the mere names of the characters. All other things being equal, it is nevertheless a bit harder, I believe you will agree, to think in terms of moons and stars and tropical skies in the company of such present nomenclatures as Muriel McGillicuddy, Private Sweeney, Petunia Jackson, Hattie Maloney, Joey Evans and Elmer Whipple — I again select at random from the shows of the last three or four years — than in the company of such of yesterday's (we'll snobbishly leave out the Princess Flavias and Duke Del Dragos) as democratic Francesca Torquato, Myles Na Coppaleen, Phoebe Fairleigh, Captain De Merrimac of the man-o'-war *Cor-*

morant, Isabella Lotterighi, and Raoul St. Courmandet, for all their affinity to Laura Jean Libbey.

In conclusion, the younger critics' lofty contempt for the species of comedy relief in the stage valentines of another epoch. Without contravening them in the least, in point of fact applauding them, let them nevertheless be reminded that if that past comedy was sufficiently reflected in such fearful

comedian character names as Bouilabaise (*Paul Jones*), Count Maladetto Spaghetti (*Sinbad*), Baron Grog (*The Grand Duchess*) and Popoff (*The Merry Widow*), the considerably later-day comedy is just as sufficiently reflected in such as Mr. Rubbish (*Yokel Boy*), Woozy (*Panama Hattie*), Henry Clay Pigeon (*Let's Face It*) and Alexander Throttlebottom (*Of Thee I Sing*).



"Now don't take it too literally."

DOWN TO EARTH

BY ALAN DEVOE

Nature in the City

IN this corner of THE AMERICAN MERCURY there has been a great deal of saying — a saying and re-saying perhaps to the point of monotony — of how steadying and healing and frequently instructing a thing it is to enter into terms of intimate understanding with the world of wild nature which pre-

cedes and exceeds our own small and recent human world. We who are human are few and new. In the measured scheme of this inhabited star, we are only a latecomer compared to the bats that have been skittering and squeaking in these skies for possibly sixty million years. We are, so to put it, new-



Chipmunk

Frank Utpatel

born and negligible, in the terms of any common hillside rock that has been living through the sweeping cycles of the seasons for a hundred millenniums.

It is well for us, then, that we get not too mazed in obsessive preoccupation with the exclusively human. The human is only a part, a new and tiny part, of this biota. We are not something alien and wholly special, that we may magnify ourselves and follow what whim we choose. We are largely made of the same ingredients that make wolves. We are an end-result, if one likes to put it so, of the happenings in a long line of reptiles and of fish. We are the late-come nephew of an owl. To cultivate an understanding of animals is to meet, as in a peculiar mirror, our own aboriginal selves, and it is to learn a wisdom from our elders.

We have an odd little gift which other animals do not have: self-consciousness and analytical thinking. (Even as the sea-horse has a gift possessed by no other fish in all the sea: it can turn its head and look back over its shoulder.) But if that makes us grow daft with self-centeredness and self-obsession and a reckless pride in capricious exercise of this good tool, we have fallen into an error. We have forgotten we are but one animal. We

have forgotten that we are only one particle in the great currents of biological happening. We go drifting off into wayward courses, with no wisdom in them. And then it is the steadying and healing and instructing thing to do, to remember our smallness and our newness and our fallibility.

Let a fox now be watched, and ourselves reminded of the pre-intellective knowings in that skull and of our own need not to lose that part of our total faculty. Let a heron be watched, and ourselves reminded that the stately harmony-with-environment of that great bird is no less a precious thing for us to cherish than is (for example) the scientific technique whereby we turn out multi-colored plastics. Let a loon be watched, and ourselves reminded that the peace of the wilderness is at least as sweet and tremendous a possession as the possession of the fastest railway-trains on earth. A fast train is very little good unless it takes its passengers to some destiny where they may be at least as happy as in the dawn-day of the race before the invention of the wheel.

The value, to our practical welfare and to the refreshment of our spirit, of giving understanding regard to the non-human companions which antedate and outnumber

ber us in the tenancy of earth, has been often celebrated. Many of the pithiest and most pointed parts of Christian Scripture are those which direct man to look to the beasts, or to look to the flowers, or to look to the hills. A hawk can teach us. A hill can humble us. We are in a common bond of blood with the wild conies; and to forget it or to deride it can be our perishing. It has all been said a great many times, in a great many idioms. It was perhaps said best of all, with a striking poignance and a memorable terseness, by Johannes Jensen. He wrote: "To go to the animals is to go home."

II

Very well. We are agreed. The horizon of a man's understanding does salutarily expand when he perceives himself only one creature of many creatures, and not exempt from the bindings of general law. A man does gain refreshment, watching a heron; he does learn something about the old deep wisdom of intuitive insight, when he watches a fox trick the hunter; he does acquire a humility, and a peace not to be defined, and a reverence that is truer than much theological brummagem, when he marks the wild geese as they go,

thunder-winged and crying, above his roof-tree on their way to the north in Spring.

But there is a practical issue to be raised; and several readers from time to time have raised it. How come to know the herons, and the serenity and the spirit of them, in a suburb of Chicago? Who shall meditate the towering fir-trees, and draw in the strength of them, when he lives a hundred miles from a hemlock? What fox ever runs, with the cunning of intuitive insight or without it, along the concrete trails and athwart the skyscraper-encircled grasslands of New York's Central Park?

It is an understandable query; but it has a fallacy in it. The fallacy is the supposing that wild nature is ever absent from *any* place. It is not absent; it cannot be. With all our inventions, all our contrivings, all our immense effort to set ourselves apart, as a special entity, from the rest of the great body of beings that the earth has spawned, we have not been able to exclude the wild. We labor to set ourselves apart from nature as vainly as the State of Tennessee once labored to set apart, by legislation, the ancestors of ourselves from those of our anthropoid kin. Through the concrete sidewalk, the fierce seed thrusts.

On the tarred and gravelled roof of a tenement, in the noisiest area of Manhattan, there comes a night-hawk — that darting haunter of the twilight forest silences — and lays her two white eggs. Have we excluded the wood-tunnelling termites from our glittering apartments? Do not gray squirrels, climbing now on power-lines with the wild grace with which once they climbed on hickory branches, still persist and thrive in a thousand cities? The warblers still come down, in their seasonal migrations, in Central Park. Out of the sour and soot-stained soil there still push up some trees; and to New York's trees this season has come a horde of ravaging caterpillars. A caterpillar, properly speaking, is a wild animal. True, the spirit of nature, nonhuman and prehuman nature, is most eloquently shown forth by the wild beasts and the wild places that have scarcely had the contact of humanity: by wolves and by uncut forests, by falcons soaring in a clean sky and by wildflowers growing in a ferny clearing where there has been none to tread on the black mould of the leaves. But, failing that . . . well, what urban-suburban commuter is deprived of the chance to watch, for instance, a chipmunk?

A chipmunk is not without

power to communicate something of the spirit, and something of the wisdom, of the uncorrupted earth. It bespeaks, in its small and unspectacular fashion, what a fox or a loon or a white-tailed deer bespeaks only more enormously. Where there is a chipmunk, there can be given to an intimate watcher — (as though he watched the wild geese, or observed from a warden's secret watchtower the herding and traveling of Wyoming antelope) — the same enlarging sense of animals' acquiescence in the great rhythms of the seasons, the same restoring awareness of the glad wild freedom that belongs to all furred and finned and feathered things, the same revelation of the deep-knowing which instructs the inmost blood of all creation, and which is not to be unriddled by all the talk of reflexes and all the guessworks about instinct in all the laboratories in the world.

A chipmunk's life is no very dramatic thing, perhaps. There is the birth, in May of the year, in the nest-chamber of the tunnel that runs a foot or two beneath the blossoming bloodroots and the yellow adder's-tongue. There is the blind and naked newness of the baby; the instinctive sucking at small chipmunk-teats; after a while, in June, there is the weaning and

the going out of this small striped squirrel to live its small wild life.

There is the making of a burrow. In a secluded place, under a fallen log or under a stone, the chipmunk digs, throwing the excavated earth behind him. Down sharply for a foot or so; then on a more gradual slope for a yard or two; then straight and level below the possible depth of frosts. Now ramifications: storage rooms for the nuts to be gathered in autumn: a central sleeping-chamber. And when the burrow is all made, then a tunnelling straight up; and then, on emergence into the outer world again, a canny going back to the place of original digging, and a sweeping away of the telltale earth, and a stoppering of the hole. Has a fox more deep-knowing? Is the primal wisdom, which pervades all the wild, better shown by happenings in the loneliest forest? A man can watch it all on a suburban front lawn: the chipmunk's Spring awakenings, his autumn storages, his long winter drowsing, his glad exultings, his cunning as when, for instance, he bites off the sharp points of the acorns before he undertakes to stuff them in his

checks. Chipmunk events are all events in minuscule; but they can be a symbolizing and reminder of the whole huge natural drama of wisdom and wildness and wonder.

Nature is never excluded. Nature comes through our walls, and thrusts with endless strength through all our barriers. No matter where a man may be, the wilderness is all around him, if he look for it. There is no city street so closed in by human architectures that a watcher cannot look up and see the stars, and be as effectually humbled as though he were a hermit on a prairie. There is no city where no birds sing. Chipmunks, or some similar little animal, are nearly everywhere. And to watch even a chipmunk intimately — taking it for symbol of all the myriads of other non-human and pre-human lives — is to experience that enlargement of vision, and that emotion at once of exaltation and of humbling, which is eternally the reason, both spiritual and practical, for the ancient counsel that it is well that men should look to the wild beasts, and should look to the flowers, and should look to the hills.



Our job is to find common ground, not to widen differences.

—HERBERT HOOVER, in broadcast on September 4, 1943

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Four New Novels

BY PHILIP RAHV

JOHN P. MARQUAND'S *So Little Time*¹ comes as an agreeable surprise. It is no doubt his best novel to date, mainly, I think, because in it he is for once concerned with the national scene as a whole rather than with the special breed of Boston and environs. Mr. Marquand, being a novelist not of the emotions but of social manners, depends more on extensive than on intensive writing for his triumphs. Restrictions of subject matter seem to have operated in his case to limit the expression of his very real literary talent. He needed to extend the range of his observation and satire, and the results are apparent in the greater relevance and force of this new work.

The better part of the surprise, though, lies in the fact that *So Little Time* is the first novel of the 1940's in which the decade is pictured with a feeling of self-conscious contemporaneity, with an intimate and even nostalgic sense of its quality as a separate unit of

time dominated by its own emotional tone, its own peculiar drives and attitudes. Usually a decade is half gone before writers become acutely aware of its "period"-quality, and until this happens the decade can hardly be said to have come of age in literature. To anticipate this inevitable process even by one or two years is of enormous advantage to a writer, as it enables him to strike the note that will later be imitated again and again. And Mr. Marquand makes the most of his head start. His handling of the "period"-effects is so finely modulated and so sure that his novel gains by it not only a certain historical value but also a good deal of its creative character.

Though Mr. Marquand's story draws upon many memories of the past, its action is centered in the years 1940-41. The hero, Jeffrey Wilson, a middle-aged play-doctor and movie-writer, provides the fictional vantage point from which we watch America's entry into the war and the changes of mood and

¹ \$2.75. Little, Brown.

attitude preceding and following this event. Jeffrey, lacking the stature and intensity of a dramatic hero, is a meditative man clearly marked for the rôle of spectator. But he is also a very bright person and a gifted observer — all of which helps to turn him into an effective agent of the author's theme of time. Above all he is conscious of those minute alterations in people's behavior and surroundings which most of us are too busy to notice only to discover one day that nothing is the same any more. And Jeffrey is in a position to see everything and meet everybody, so that through his eyes we observe life in New York, suburban Connecticut, Hollywood, and Washington.

Jeffrey reacts to the war chiefly in terms of the changes effected in personal relationships, which nowadays seem to him "nearly as impermanent as real estate values." Yet he himself stays put. He is the constant factor in a world of variables. His one attempt to break away from well-paid commercial work and write a play of his own is scarcely more than a gallant gesture. Madge, his wife, has the cruelty of the conventional woman who must have everything nice and tidy, but Jeffrey is so perfectly adjusted to her faults that he can-

not seriously think of leaving her. His affair with the actress, Marianne Miller, comes to nothing because he is incapable of a passionate response. (This affair is so casual and tepid and "civilized" as to become altogether unreal. Marquand is in any case at his worst when dealing with sexual experience. The physical has little reality for him. Like Sinclair Lewis and other satirists, he invariably converts relations of love into purely social relations.) But Jeffrey does make a stand to save the happiness of his son, Jim, who finally marries as he wishes despite the endless interference of Madge. A veteran of the last war, Jeffrey is able to identify himself utterly with Jim, the young soldier who has "so little time" to enjoy his life. And it is through this close identification of father and son that the past is interwoven with the present and the pathos of war is most keenly felt.

The best chapters of the book, however, are those dealing not with Jeffrey's more personal concerns but with the life and times of his friends and acquaintances. There is the wonderful portrait of Walter Newcombe, the foreign correspondent, of whom it was easy enough to say that his works possessed "a plus quality of literary essence, as his publisher put it in that speech

at the Astor." Here is where Mr. Marquand accomplishes a job of pioneering, for the foreign correspondent, a new type of hero lifted by the war from relative obscurity to the heights of public favor, has heretofore escaped the clinical treatment administered by the realistic novelist. Quite as brilliant is the description of Fred and Beckie, the Connecticut couple who labor mightily to turn their home into a shrine of middle class culture. And there are more set pieces of satire and exact recreation of our newer social conventions that enliven the rather slow movement of the story.

As a satirist Mr. Marquand never quite goes the whole length, though he can be ruthless enough when it suits his purpose in a particular scene; he is keen and knowing rather than mordant or consistently hostile. Lacking basic ideas, he cannot maintain his hostilities on a consistent level for fear of venturing out beyond his depth. Mr. Marquand is a typical American satirist (here again Sinclair Lewis comes to mind) who is more often than not half in love with the object of his satire. Thus it happens that Walter Newcombe is rehabilitated before long, shown to be a brave little fellow after all; Madge, too, being so much a part of the

background in which the author's values are rooted, is in the end seen to be quite a lovable person in her way despite the nuisance she makes of herself. This tendency to renounce the satire before it is clinched explains in part why the last chapters fall below the level of the opening and middle sections. One finishes the story with a sense of disappointment. Too many of the features of life satirized at the beginning are restored to our proper respect at the end. The book has a circular motion that brings us right back to where we were before the start. But the trip is nevertheless well worth taking for the splendid entertainment it affords.

II

Robert Penn Warren, the distinguished Southern poet and critic, has of late tried his hand, and with marked success, as a writer of fiction. His second novel, *At Heaven's Gate*,² seems to me to lack the unity and technical mastery of his first effort, *Night Rider*, but even so I think that from a literary point of view it is the most serious and ambitious prose-narrative published this year by an American author.

At Heaven's Gate reminds one of

² \$2.75. Harcourt, Brace.

the fiction both of William Faulkner and John Dos Passos — a combination not often attempted and quite startling in its results. For this novel has, on the one hand, Faulkner's violence and morbidly close reading of the family annals of the Old South, and on the other it manifests the feeling for political phenomena and understanding of the economic problems of our society characteristic of Dos Passos. Mr. Warren has obviously gone a long way since the time when he belonged to the so-called Agrarian group of Southern writers, led by Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom, who, advocating a return to the traditions of the Confederacy, openly and defiantly proclaimed their "reactionary" disposition. To judge by his latest work, Mr. Warren now believes that a return to the past is neither possible nor desirable.

The scene of the story is a Southern city (presumably Nashville, Tennessee) in the 1920's. The entire plot originates in the actions of Bogan Murdock, a corrupt financier in control of the state's political machine, who is pictured as a man sick with that disease of our age — "the abstract passion for power, a vanity springing from an awareness of the emptiness and unreality of the self, which can

only attempt to become real and human by the oppression of people who manage to retain some shreds of humanity and reality." Murdock's daughter, Sue, yearning for her father's strength and equally self-willed, none the less revolts against his way of life only to become immersed in an hysterical Bohemian existence. In the end she is murdered by one of her lovers, Slim Sarret, a poet who typifies the precise intellectual content as well as the moral ambiguity and decadence of certain trends in modern art. The murder is the climax of a sordid scandal that shatters Murdock's political machine and his financial empire. The novel comes to a close in a welter of ruin and violence. The one figure left standing is the poor white evangelist, Ashby Wyndham, whose story, forming a separate strain in the novel, is told in a somewhat idyllic folk-style that provides a proper contrast to the tense, nervous prose of the main text. We are made to feel, however, that Wyndham, too, is a victim of blind anarchic forces, and that his primitive religiosity is but another trap.

The chief weakness of the book is that the characters do not have a sufficient life of their own. They are too much at the mercy of the author's sociological and moral in-

tentions. Yet *At Heaven's Gate*, for all its defects, must be placed in the main line of American fiction. It prefigures a vital change in the literature of the South — its liberation from the arid romanticism of the past through renewed contacts with the modern world.

III

The two remaining novels on my list have only one thing in common, the use of Freudian ideas and the appearance of a psychoanalyst as a leading figure. But the two authors assign entirely different rôles to their respective practitioners of the Freudian therapy. Verplanck, in Allan Seager's *Equinox*,³ is so sinister a character as to resemble an old-fashioned villain, whereas in Laura Z. Hobson's *The Trespassers*⁴ Dr. Vederle emerges as a true hero who never falters in his struggle against the darkness within and without the human soul.

Equinox, despite some passages of incisive writing, is scarcely anything more than a crude psychological melodrama. Its theme of incest — or rather the fear of incest that bedevils the relationship of a father and daughter and finally

leads to the daughter's suicide — is developed in a sub-literary manner. The whole thing has an air of contrivance, of the manipulation of Freudian ideas and findings for illegitimate ends — illegitimate, that is, from the point of view of the writer's relation to his material.

The theme of incest invites tragic treatment, but in this novel the tragedy is merely the mechanical outcome of the machinations of Verplanck, the amateur analyst who instead of curing neuroses makes every effort to induce them in the people that fall under his influence. He wants to watch their disintegration and is even willing to finance the process. The man is actually a maniac; and unless Mr. Seager means to say, which is hardly the case, that psychoanalysis is a maniacal science threatening the mental health of the community, it is hard to see just what possible meaning can be attached to Verplanck's dominant rôle in the story. A tragic situation is convincing when it is shown to be inevitable, and Verplanck's mad doings are anything but inevitable.

Furthermore, the motivation of some of the other characters is equally arbitrary. Why is the smart career woman, Margery Elliot, turned into a monstrously whorish creature within the space of a few

³ \$2.75. Simon and Schuster.

⁴ \$2.75. Simon and Schuster.

chapters? The fact is that the more "ulcerous and beautiful" Margery becomes, the more confusing and wearisome her behavior. If Mr. Seager is intent on dealing with the evil in human nature, then he should deal with it in more manageable quantities.

In *The Trespassers* Mrs. Hobson is likewise concerned with evil — the evil wrought by the power-mongers whether in public or in private life. The novel tells two widely separated stories that are eventually joined by the coming together of the two protagonists — Vera Marriner, the girl who has been made prostrate by a disastrous love affair in New York, and Dr. Franz Vederle, the Viennese analyst who endures the torments of hell before obtaining refuge in this country. The plight of the refugees from the Hitler terror and the heartless bureaucratic manner in which they are treated when trying to escape to America is described by Mrs. Hobson in a fine heat of indignation. It is with great dramatic skill that she has worked into her account the documentary material pertinent to this problem, surely one of the most harassing produced by the war. If it contained nothing else, this book would deserve the widest circulation.

The crucial point of the novel is

the connection between Vera and Dr. Vederle. At first the connection hardly exists, for all that Vera knows of Dr. Vederle is that at the request of a friend she had signed an affidavit for him and mailed it to his address in Switzerland. While Dr. Vederle spends his days in the anterooms of American consulates, Vera is engaged in a love affair with Jasper Crown, a ruthless executive of the radio industry who is resolved to achieve power and fame at all costs.

Among the costs is his desertion of Vera, whom he had gotten with child to prove that he is not sterile, as he had long feared. Once he is sure the proof is forthcoming, he discards her as one would discard a used-up instrument. It is at this juncture that Vera discovers in her sympathy for Dr. Vederle a means of healing the injury to her mind and spirit caused by her lover. One wishes, however, that Jasper Crown were not quite so finished a villain. There is no disputing, of course, that men have sometimes been known to behave that way. Truth, as they say, is stranger than fiction, but the business of the fiction-writer is to assimilate even the strangest truths to the common experience of mankind.

THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page 516)

Times, lived in Italy for many years, and covered the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and Mussolini's war against the Spanish republic. Mr. Matthews often leans over backward in his attempt to find something good in the past accomplishments of the fascist régime before the Abyssinia adventure, but his book on the whole is a sound and solid achievement.

AMERICAN HEROES AND HERO-WORSHIP, by Gerald W. Johnson. \$3.00. *Harper's*. A collection of political essays on Pierre-Samuel Du Pont de Nemours, Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson, Martin Van Buren and Henry Clay, William Henry Harrison, Thomas Edward Watson, William Jennings Bryan and Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson. While there is no new information in them, Mr. Johnson, who commands a clear and ingratiating style, manages to put his subjects in relatively fresh perspective. His general point of view is that the judgment of history is often sounder than contemporary public opinion. His chapter on Wilson and world peace is especially good and timely.

THE AIR FUTURE, A PRIMER OF AEROPOLITICS, by Burnet Hershey. \$2.75. *Duell, Sloan and Pearce*. A good, easy-reading journalistic account of the history of commercial aviation, its postwar problems and its perspectives.

A SHORT HISTORY OF CHINESE CIVILIZATION, by Tsui Chi. \$4.00. *Putnam*. An extraordinarily compact history of China by a Chinese who writes a remarkably lucid English. Mr. Chi begins with pre-historic times and carries his account down to the

present. At the end are excellent chronologies and bibliographies. There is a preface by Laurence Binyon.

PRIMER FOR AMERICA, by Robert P. Tristram Coffin. \$2.00. *Macmillan*. A collection of 138 robust ballads about the heroes, prides, attitudes, pieties, inventions, religious cults and regional folklore of the United States. Almost all of them could easily be set to music. There are many illustrations by the author.

GIVE OUT! SONGS OF, FOR AND BY THE MEN IN SERVICE, edited by Eric Posselt. \$1.25. *Arrowhead*. Over a hundred gay and heterogeneous songs, sometimes with music, which have come out of this war. Profusely and cleverly illustrated.

THE PROGRESS OF PAN-AMERICANISM. A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF LATIN-AMERICAN OPINION, translated and edited by T. H. Reynolds. *Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C.* An intelligent collection of articles, reports, speeches and documents on all aspects of Latin American relations, culled mainly from the newspapers and magazines of the Latin American countries. There are also condensed reports of the various Pan-American and Inter-American conferences of Panama, Havana, Rio, Lima, etc. It is, however, greatly regrettable that this 250,000 word volume has not only no alphabetical index, but not even a table of contents.

FICTION

A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN, by Betty Smith. \$2.75. *Harper's*. The childhood and adolescence of Francie Nolan of the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn just before and during World War I. Warm-hearted and

full of humorous and tragic incidents, it is a joy to read.

TANGLEWEED, by George Willis. \$2.00. *Doubleday, Doran*. Authentic story of a swing drummer who had to get with it. Written with perception and sensitivity. Several of the chapters first appeared in *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*.

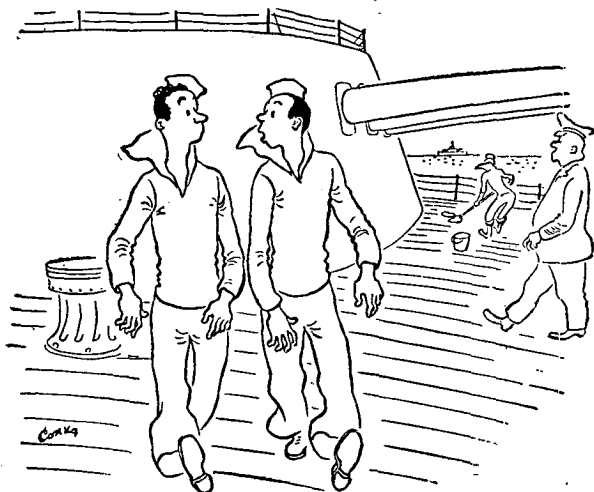
GRAND CROSSING, by Alexander Saxton. \$2.50. *Harper's*. The revolt of youth in this world, where the hero finds that it is better education to go hitch-hiking across the country than to study at Harvard, though he does the latter, too. Fairly interesting.

THE BRIDE DINED ALONE, by Vera Kelsey. \$2.00. *Crime Club*. Thrice-married, twice-widowed female returns home with her

new acquisition after a sojourn in South America—and several deaths occur. Although the reader is pretty sure where the guilt lies, the question remains, Will retribution come?

COLOUR SCHEME, by Ngaio Marsh. \$2.50. *Little, Brown*. Murder and espionage at a thermal resort in New Zealand. Excellent background and an entirely believable set of characters.

THE BODY FELL ON BERLIN, by Richard Lakin. \$2.50. *Putnam's*. Former Scotland Yard man, now intelligence officer at an English airfield, has a chance to practice his old profession when he discovers that a body was dropped on Berlin from the bomb rack of "N for Nuts." Excellent suspense and a romance thrown in for good measure.



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1. BUY ONLY WHAT YOU NEED
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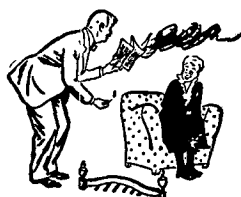
2. PAY NO MORE THAN CEILING PRICES

If you do pay more, you're party to a black market that boosts prices. And if prices go up through the ceiling, your money will be worth less. Buy rationed goods only with stamps.



3. SUPPORT HIGHER TAXES

It's easier and cheaper to pay for the war as you go. And it's better to pay big taxes *now*—while you have the extra money to do it. Every dollar put into taxes means a dollar less to bid for scarce goods and boost prices.



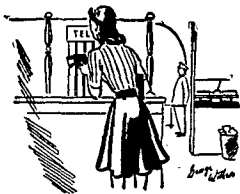
4. PAY OFF OLD DEBTS

Paid-off debts make you independent now . . . and make your life a whale of a lot safer against the day you may be earning less. So pay off every cent you owe—and avoid making new debts as you'd be helping Hitler!



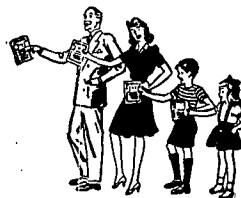
5. DON'T ASK MORE MONEY

In wages for yourself, or in prices for goods you have to sell. That puts prices up for the things all of us buy. We're all in this war together—business men, farmers and workers. Increases come out of everybody's pocket—including *yours*.



6. SAVE FOR THE FUTURE

Money in the savings bank will come in handy for emergencies. And money in life insurance protects your family, protects you in old age. See that you're ready to meet any situation.



7. BUY WAR BONDS

and hang on to them. Buy as many as you can afford. Then cut corn to buy more. Bonds put money to work fighting the war instead of allowing it to shove up prices. They mean safety for you tomorrow. They'll help keep . . .

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SOMETIMES I feel so good it almost scares me. "This house—I wouldn't swap a shingle off its roof for any other house on earth. This little valley, with the pond down in the hollow at the back, is the spot I like best in all the world.

"And they're mine. I own 'em. Nobody can take 'em away from me.

"I've got a little money coming in, regularly. Not much—but enough. And I tell you, when you can go to bed every night with nothing on your mind except the fun you're going to have tomorrow—that's as near Heaven as a man gets on this earth!

"It wasn't always so.

"Back in '43—that was our second year of war, when we were really getting into it—I needed cash. Taxes were tough, and then Ellen got sick.

Like most everybody else, I was buying War Bonds through the Payroll Plan—and I figured on cashing some of them in. But sick as she was, it was Ellen who talked me out of it.

"'Don't do it, John!' she said. 'Please don't! For the first time in our lives, we're really saving money. It's wonderful to know that every single payday we have more money put aside! John, if we can only keep up this saving, think what it can mean! Maybe someday you won't have to work. Maybe we can own a home. And oh, how good it would feel to know that we need never worry about money when we're old!'

"Well, even after she got better, I stayed away from the weekly poker game—quit dropping a little cash at the hot spots now and then—gave up some of the things a man feels he has a right to. We made clothes do—cut out fancy foods. We didn't have as much fun for a while but we paid our taxes and the doctor and—we didn't touch the War Bonds.

"We didn't touch the War Bonds then, or any other time. And I know this: The world wouldn't be such a swell place today if we had!"

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